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NOTES OF A JOURNEY

THROUGH

FRANCE AND ITALY.

84379

I' the world's volume
Our Britain seems as of it, but not in it;
In a great pool, a swan's nest. Prithee think
There's livers out of Britain.——CYMBELINE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Notes of a Journey through France and Italy *are reprinted from the columns of the* MORNING CHRONICLE. *The favourable reception they met with there suggested the idea of the present work. My object has been to describe what I saw or remarked myself; or to give the reader some notion of what he might expect to find in travelling the same road. There is little of history or antiquities or statistics; nor do I regret the want of them, as it may be abundantly supplied from other sources. The only thing I could have wished to expatiate upon more at large is the* manners *of the country: but to do justice to this, a greater length of time and a more intimate acquaintance with society and the language would be necessary. Perhaps, at some future opportunity, this defect may be remedied.*

Page

CHAP. IX. Mademoiselle Mars. The *Théatre Français.* Molière's *Misanthrope* and *Tartuffe.* Admirable Manner of casting a Play in Paris. French Actors, Le Peintre, Odry, and Potier. Talma and Mademoiselle Georges 114

CHAP. X. Description of Paris. The Garden of the Tuileries. The *Champ de Mars.* The *Jardin des Plantes.* Reflections 129

CHAP. XI. French Sculpture. Note on the Elgin Marbles 144

CHAP. XII. The French Opera. Dido and Æneas. Madame Le Gallois in the Ballet. Italian Opera or *Salle Louvois.* Mombelli and Pellegrini in the *Gazza Ladra.* Allusion to Brunet 157

CHAP. XIII. Leave Paris for Lyons. Adventures on the Road. Fontainbleau. Montargis. Girl at the Inn there. A French Diligence. Moulins. Palisseau. The Bourbonnois. Descent into Tarare. Meeting with a young Englishman there. Arrival at Lyons. Manners of French Servants. French Translation of Tom Jones. M. Martine's *Death of Socrates* . . . 169

CHAP. XIV. Set out for Turin by Way of Mont Cenis. The Cheats of Scapin. The Diligence. Pont Beau Voisin, the frontier Town of the King of Sardinia's Dominions. Have to pass the Custom House. My Box of Books *leaded.* A Note which is little to the Purpose. First View of the Alps. The Grand Chartreuse. Cavern of La Grotte. Chambery. St.

Page

Michelle. Lans-le-Bourg. Our Spanish fellow-traveller. Passage of Mount Cenis. Arrival at Susa 184

CHAP. XV. Turin. Its magnificent Situation. The Effect of first feeling one's-self in Italy. Theatre. Capital Pantomime-acting. Passports. Get seats in a Voiture to Florence, with two English Ladies. Mode of travelling. Italian Peasants. Parma. Windows lined with Faces. Maria-Louisa. Character of Correggio. Frescoes by the same in the Cupola of St. Paul's. The Farnese Theatre. Bologna. Academy of Painting. Towns in Italy 209

CHAP. XVI. Road to Florence. The Apennines. Covigliaijo. La Maschere. Approach to and Description of Florence. Carnival. Lent. The Popish Calendar. Fesole. Cold in Italy 232

CHAP. XVII. The public Gallery. Antique Busts. The Venus. Raphael's Fornarina. The Perseus of Benvenuto Cellini. John of Bologna's Rape of the Sabines. The Palace Pitti 254

CHAP. XVIII. Sienna. Radicofani. Aquapendente. Description of the Inn there. San Lorenzo. Monte-Fiascone. Lake of Bolsena. Desolate Appearance of the Country near Rome. First View of St. Peter's from Baccano . . . . . .

CHAP. XIX. Rome. The Vatican. The Capella Sistina. Holy Week. The Coliseum. The Temple of Vesta. Picture Galleries—the Ruspigliosi, Doria, Borghese, Corsini, and Little Farnese. Guido 279

CHAP. XX. Character of the English 297

Page

CHAP. XXI. Return to Florence. Italian Banditti. Terni. Tivoli. Spoleto. Church and Pictures at Assizi. Perugia. An Irish Priest. Cortona. Arezzo. Incisa 319

CHAP. XXII. Journey to Venice. Plain of Lombardy. A country Inn. Ferrara. Rovigo. Padua. Description of Venice 339

CHAP. XXIII. Palaces at Venice—the Grimani, Barberigo, and Manfrini Collections. Paul Veronese. Titian's St. Peter Martyr. The Assumption and Martyrdom of St. Lawrence. St. Mark's Place . 350

CHAP. XXIV. Journey to Milan. Verona. The Tomb of Juliet. The Amphitheatre. The Fortress of Peschiera. Lake of Garda. Milan. The Inhabitants. The Duomo. Theatre of the Gran Scala. Isola Bella. Lago Maggiore. Baveno 362

CHAP. XXV. The passage over the Simplon. Inn at Brigg. Valley of the Simplon. Sion. Bex. Vevey. 373

CHAP. XXVI. Excursion to Chamouni. Mont-Blanc. Geneva. Lausanne 387

CHAP. XXVII. Return down the Rhine through Holland. Concluding remarks 401

NOTES OF A JOURNEY

THROUGH

FRANCE AND ITALY.

CHAPTER I.

THE rule for travelling abroad is to take our common sense with us, and leave our prejudices behind us. The object of travelling is to see and learn; but such is our impatience of ignorance, or the jealousy of our self-love, that we generally set up a certain preconception beforehand (in self-defence, or as a barrier against the lessons of experience,) and are surprised at r quarrel with all that does not conform to it. Let us think what we please of what we really find, but prejudge nothing. The English, in particular, carry out their own defects as a standard for general imitation; and think the virtues of others (that are not *their* vices) good for nothing. Thus they find fault with the gaiety of the French as impertinence, with their politeness as grimace. This repulsive system of carping and contradiction can extract neither use nor meaning from any thing, and only tends

to make those who give way to it uncomfortable and ridiculous. On the contrary, we should be as seldom shocked or annoyed as possible, (it is our vanity or ignorance that is mortified much oftener than our reason!) and contrive to see the favourable side of things. This will turn both to profit and pleasure. The intellectual, like the physical, is best kept up by an exchange of commodities, instead of an ill-natured and idle search after grievances. The first thing an Englishman does on going abroad is to find fault with what is French, because it is not English. If he is determined to confine all excellence to his own country, he had better stay at home.

On arriving at Brighton (in the full season,) a lad offered to conduct us to an inn. "Did he think there was room?" He was sure of it. "Did he belong to the inn?" No, he was from London. In fact, he was a young gentleman from town, who had been stopping some time at the White-Horse Hotel, and who wished to employ his spare time (when he was not riding out on a blood-horse) in serving the house, and relieving the perplexities of his fellow-travellers. No one but a Londoner would volunteer his assistance in this way. Amiable land of *Cockayne*, happy in itself, and in making others happy! Blest exuberance of self-satisfaction, that overflows upon others! Delightful impertinence, that is forward to oblige them!

There is something in being near the sea, like the confines of eternity. It is a new element, a pure abstraction. The mind loves to hover on that which is endless, and forever the same. People wonder at a steam-boat, the invention of man, managed by man, that makes its liquid path like an iron railway through the sea—I wonder at the sea itself, that vast Leviathan, rolled round the earth, smiling in its sleep, waked into fury, fathomless, boundless, a huge world of water-drops—Whence is it, whither goes it, is it of eternity or of nothing? Strange, ponderous riddle, that we can neither penetrate nor grasp in our comprehension, ebbing and flowing like human life, and swallowing it up in thy remorseless womb,—what art thou? What is there in common between thy life and ours, who gaze at thee? Blind, deaf and old, thou seest not, hearest not, understandest not; neither do we understand, who behold and listen to thee! Great as thou art, unconscious of thy greatness, unwieldy, enormous, preposterous twin-birth of matter, rest in thy dark, unfathomed cave of mystery, mocking human pride and weakness. Still is it given to the mind of man to wonder at thee, to confess its ignorance, and to stand in awe of thy stupendous might and majesty, and of its own being, that can question thine! But a truce with reflections.

The Pavilion at Brighton is like a collection of stone pumpkins and pepper-boxes. It seems as if the genius of architecture had at once the dropsy and

the *megrims*. Any thing more fantastical, with a greater dearth of invention, was never seen. The King's stud (if they were horses of taste) would petition against so irrational a lodging.

Brighton stands facing the sea, on the bare cliffs, with glazed windows to reflect the glaring sun, and black pitchy bricks shining like the scales of fishes. The town is however gay with the influx of London visitors—happy as the conscious abode of its sovereign! Every thing here appears in motion—coming or going. People at a watering-place may be compared to the flies of a summer; or to fashionable dresses, or suits of clothes walking about the streets. The only idea you gain is, of finery and motion. The road between London and Brighton presents some very charming scenery; Reigate is a prettier English country-town than is to be found anywhere—out of England! As we entered Brighton in the evening, a Frenchman was playing and singing to a guitar. It was a relief to the conversation in the coach, which had been chiefly supported in a nasal tone by a disciple of Mrs. Fry and amanuensis of philanthropy in general. As we heard the lively musician warble, we forgot the land of Sunday-schools and spinning-jennies. The genius of the South had come out to meet us.

We left Brighton in the steam-packet, and soon saw the shores of Albion recede from us. *Out of sight, out of mind.* How poor a geographer is the human

mind! How small a space does the imagination take in at once! In travelling, our ideas change like the scenes of a pantomime, displacing each other as completely and rapidly. Long before we touched on French ground, the English coast was lost in distance, and nothing remained of it but a dim mist; it hardly seemed "in a great pool a swan's nest." So shall its glory vanish like a vapour, its liberty like a dream!

We had a fine passage in the steam-boat (Sept. 1, 1824.) Not a cloud, scarce a breath of air; a moon, and then star-light, till the dawn, with rosy fingers, ushered us into Dieppe. Our fellow-passengers were pleasant and unobtrusive, an English party of the better sort: a Member of Parliament, delighted to escape from "late hours and bad company;" an English General, proud of his bad French; a Captain in the Navy, glad to enter a French harbour peaceably; a Country Squire, extending his inquiries beyond his paternal acres; the younger sons of wealthy citizens, refined through the strainers of a University-education and finishing off with foreign travel; a young Lawyer, quoting Peregrine Pickle, and divided between his last circuit and projected tour. There was also a young Dutchman, looking mild through his mustachios, and a new-married couple (a French Jew and Jewess) who grew uxorious from the effects of sea-sickness, and took refuge from the qualms of the disorder in paroxysms of tenderness. We had some difficulty in getting into the harbour, and had to wait till morning

for the tide. I grew very tired, and laid the blame on the time lost in getting some restive horses on board, but found that if we had set out two hours sooner, we should only have had to wait two hours longer. The doctrine of *Optimism* is a very good and often a very true one in travelling. In advancing up the steps to give the officers our passport, I was prevented by a young man and woman, who said they were before me, and on making a second attempt, an elderly gentleman and lady set up the same claim, because they stood *behind* me. It seemed that a servant was waiting with passports for four. Persons in a certain class of life are so full of their own business and importance, that they imagine every one else must be aware of it—I hope this is the last specimen I shall for some time meet with of city-manners. After a formal custom-house search, we procured admittance at Pratt's Hotel, where they said they had reserved a bed for a Lady. France is a country where they give *honneur aux Dames*. The window looked out on the bridge and on the river, which reflected the shipping and the houses; and we should have thought ourselves luckily off, but that the bed, which occupied a niche in the sitting-room, had that kind of odour which could not be mistaken for otto of roses.

DIEPPE.—This town presents a very agreeable and romantic appearance to strangers. It is cut up into a number of distinct divisions by canals, drawbridges,

and bastions, as if to intercept the progress of an enemy. The best houses, too, are shut up in close courts and high walls on the same principle, that is, to stand a further siege in the good old times. There are rows of lime-trees on the quay, and some of the narrow streets running from it look like wells. This town is a picture to look at; it is a pity that it is not a nosegay, and that the passenger who ventures to explore its nooks and alleys is driven back again by "a compound of villainous smells," which seem to grow out of the ground. In walking the streets, one must take one's nose with one, and that sense is apt to be offended in France as well as in Scotland. Is it hence called in French *the organ of sense?* The houses and the dresses are equally old-fashioned. In France one lives in the imagination of the past; in England every thing is new and on an improved plan. Such is the progress of mechanical invention! In Dieppe there is one huge mis-shapen, but venerable-looking Gothic Church (a theological fixture,) instead of twenty new-fangled erections, Egyptian, Greek or Coptic. The head-dresses of the women are much the same as those which the *Spectator* laughed out of countenance a hundred years ago in England, with high plaited crowns, and lappets hanging down over the shoulders. The shape and colours of the bodice and petticoat are what we see in Dutch pictures; the faces of the common people we are familiarized with in Mieris and Jan Steen. They are full and fair like

the Germans, and have not the *minced* and peaked character we attribute to the French. They are not handsome, but good-natured, expressive, placid. They retain the look of peasants more than the town's-people with us, whether from living more in the open air, or from greater health and temperance, I cannot say. What I like in their expression (so far) is not the vivacity, but the goodness, the simplicity, the thoughtful resignation. The French are full of gesticulation when they speak; they have at other times an equal appearance of repose and content. You see the figure of a girl sitting in the sun, so still that her dress seems like streaks of red and black chalk against the wall; a soldier reading; a group of old women (with skins as tough, yellow, and wrinkled as those of a tortoise) chatting in a corner and laughing till their sides are ready to split; or a string of children tugging a fishing-boat out of the harbour as evening goes down, and making the air ring with their songs and shouts of merriment (a sight to make Mr. Malthus shudder!). Life here glows, or spins carelessly round on its soft axle. The same animal spirits that supply a fund of cheerful thoughts, break out into all the extravagance of mirth and social glee. The air is a cordial to them, and they drink drams of sunshine. My particular liking to the French is, however, confined to their natural and unsophisticated character. The good spirits "with which they are clothed and fed," and which eke out the deficiencies

of fortune or good government, are perhaps too much for them, when joined with external advantages, or artificial pretensions. Their vivacity becomes insolence in office; their success, presumption; their gentility, affectation and grimace. But the national physiognomy (taken at large) is the reflection of good temper and humanity. One thing is evident, and decisive in their favour—they do not insult or point at strangers, but smile on them good-humouredly, and answer them civilly.

"Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please!"

Nothing shews the contented soul within, so much as our not seeking for amusement in the mortifications of others: we only envy their advantages, or sneer at their defects, when we are conscious of wanting something ourselves. The customs and employments of the people here have a more primitive and picturesque appearance than in England. Is it that with us every thing is made domestic and commodious, instead of being practised in the open air, and subject to the casualties of the elements? For instance, you see the women washing clothes in the river, with their red petticoats and bare feet, instead of standing over a washing-tub. Human life with us is framed and set in comforts: but it wants the vivid colouring, the glowing expression that we meet elsewhere. After all, is not the romantic effect produced partly owing to the novelty of the scene; or do we not attribute

to a superiority in others what is merely a greater liveliness of impression in ourselves, arising from curiosity and contrast? If this were all, foreigners ought to be as much delighted with us, but they are not. A man and woman came and sung "God save the King," before the windows of the Hotel, as if the French had so much loyalty at present that they can spare us some of it. What an opinion must they have formed of the absurd nationality of the English, to suppose that we can expect them to feel this sort of mock-sentiment towards our King! What English ballad-singer would dream of flattering the French visitors by a song in praise of Louis *le Desiré* before a Brighton or a Dover Hotel?

As the door opened just now, I saw the lad or *garçon*, who waits on us, going up stairs with a looking-glass, and admiring himself in it. If he is pleased with himself, he is no less satisfied with us, and with every thing else.

CHAPTER II.

THE road from Dieppe to Rouen is highly interesting. You at first ascend a straight steep hill, which commands a view of the town and harbour behind you, with villas on each side, something between modern cottages and antique castles; and afterwards, from the top of the hill, the prospect spreads out over endless plains, richly cultivated. It has been conjectured that the English borrowed their implements and modes of husbandry from their Norman Conquerors; the resemblance is, indeed, complete to a deception. You might suppose one side of the channel was transported to the other, from the general aspect of the country, from the neatness of the orchard-plots, the gardens, and farm-yards. Every thing has a look of the greatest industry and plenty. There is a scanty proportion of common pasturage; but rich fields of clover, oats, barley, and vetches, with luxuriant crops ready to cut, are presented to the eye in uninterrupted succession; there are no wastes, no barren, thankless enclosures; every foot of ground seems to be cultivated with the utmost success. It is in vain after this to talk of English agriculture, as if no such thing

existed anywhere else. Agriculture can do no more than make provision that every part of the soil is carefully tilled, and raise the finest crops from it. The only distinctive feature is, that there are here no hedges along the road-side, their place being supplied by rows of apple-trees or groves of elm and poplar, which stretch out before you in lengthened vistas, as far as the eye can reach. We like this, whatever Mr. Mac-Adam may object; and moreover, the roads here are as good as his. To be sure, they are much broader, and admit of this collateral improvement. Shady plantations open their arms to meet you, closing in a point, or terminated by a turn in the road; and then you enter upon another long hospitable avenue,

"Bidding the lovely scenes at distance hail;"

the smiling landscape waves on either side to a considerable extent; you pass a shepherd tending his flock, or a number of peasants returning from market in a light long waggon, like a hen-coop; the bells of the horses jingle, the postilion cracks his whip, or speaks to them with a friendly voice, and the *Diligence* rolls on, at the rate of six miles an hour towards Paris!—Travelling is much cheaper in France than in England. The distance from Dieppe to Rouen is thirty-six miles, and we only paid eight francs, that is, six shillings and eight pence a-piece, with two francs more to the guide and postillion, which is not four-

pence a mile, including all expenses. On the other hand, you have not the advantage of taking an outside place at half-price, as a very trifling difference is made in this respect.

The Diligence itself cuts a very awkward figure, compared with our stage-coaches. There is much the same difference as between a barge and a pleasure-boat; but then it is roomy and airy, and remarkably easy in its motion. In the common mechanic arts the French attend to the essential only; we are so fond of elegance and compactness, that we sacrifice ease to show and finish. The harness of the horses is made of ropes or rusty leather, and it is wonderful how they get along so well as they do, three, or sometimes four a-breast. The apples of the orchards hang over the road-side, which speaks well for the honesty of the inhabitants, or the plenty of the country. The women appear to work a good deal out of doors. Some of the older ones have strangely distorted visages, and those horrid Albert-Durer chins and noses, that have been coming together for half a century. The younger ones are handsome, healthy-looking, animated; a better sort of English country girls. The character of French coquetry prevails even here, and you see a young peasant-girl, broiling in the sun, with a blue paper cap on her head, that glitters like the smoothest satin, and that answers the purpose of finery just as well. I observed that one man frequently holds the plough and guides the horses without

any one else to assist him, as they do in Scotland, and which in England they hold to be an agricultural heresy. In Surrey, where an English gentleman had hired a Scotch servant to try this method, the boors actually collected round the man in the church-yard on Sunday, and pointed at him, crying, "That's he who ploughs and drives the horses himself!" Our prejudices are no less on the alert, and quite as obstinate against what is right as what is wrong. I cannot say I was quite pleased with my barber at Dieppe, who inserted a drop of citron juice in the lather I was to shave with, and converted it into a most agreeable perfume. It was an association of ideas, a false refinement, to which I had not been accustomed, and to which I was averse. The best excuse I could find for my reluctance to be pleased, was that at the next place where the same thing was attempted, the operator, by some villainous mixture, almost stunk me to death!

The entrance into Rouen, through extensive archways of tall trees, planted along the margin of the Seine, is certainly delectable. Here the genius of civilized France first began to display itself. Companies of men and women were sitting in the open air, enjoying the cool of the evening, and the serene moonlight, under Chinese lamps, with fruit and confectionery. We arrived rather late, but were well received and accommodated at the Hotel Vatel. My bad French by no means, however, conciliates the regard or in-

creases the civility of the people on the road. They pay particular attention, and are particularly delighted with the English, who speak French well, or with tolerable fluency and correctness, for they think it a compliment to themselves and to the language; whereas, besides their dislike to all difficulty and uncertainty of communication, they resent an obvious neglect on this point as an affront, and an unwarrantable assumption of superiority, as if it were enough for an Englishman to shew himself among them to be well received, without so much as deigning to make himself intelligible. A person, who passes through a country in sullen silence, must appear very much in the character of a spy. Many things (a native is conscious) will seem strange to a foreigner, who can neither ask the meaning, nor understand the explanation of them; and on the other hand, if in these circumstances you are loquacious and inquisitive, you become proportionably troublesome. It would have been better (such is the natural feeling, the dictate at once of self-love and common sense) to have learned the language before you visited the country. An accent, an occasional blunder, a certain degree of hesitation are amusing, and indirectly flatter the pride of foreigners; but a total ignorance or wilful reluctance in speaking shews both a contempt for the people, and an inattention to good manners. To neglect to make one's self master of a language tacitly implies, that in travelling through a country we have

neither wants nor wishes to gratify; that we are quite independent, and have no ambition to give pleasure, or to receive instruction.

At Rouen the walls of our apartment were bare, being mere lath and plaster, a huge cobweb hung in the window, the curtains were shabby and dirty, and the floor without carpetting or matting; but our table was well-furnished, and in the English taste. French cooking comprehends English, and easily condescends to it; so that an Englishman finds himself better off in France than a Frenchman does in England. They complain that our cookery is dry, and our solid, unsavoury morsels, beef-steaks, and mutton chops, must stick in their throats as well as be repulsive to their imaginations; nor can we supply the additional sauces or disguises which are necessary to set them off. On the other hand, we had a dinner at the Hotel Vatel, a roast fowl, greens, and bacon, as plain, as sweet, and wholesome, as we could get at an English farm-house. We had also pigeons, partridges, and other game, in excellent preservation, and kept quite clear of French receipts and odious ragouts. Game or poultry is the half-way house, a sort of middle point, between French and English cookery. The bread here is excellent, the butter admirable, the milk and coffee superior to what we meet with at home. The wine and fruit, too, are delightful, but real French dishes are an abomination to an English palate. Unless a man means to stay all

his life abroad, let him beware of making the experiment, or get near enough to the door to make his *exit* suddenly. The common charges at the inns are much the same as in England; we paid twenty-pence for breakfast, and half a crown, or three shillings, for dinner. The best Burgundy is only three shillings and four-pence a bottle. A green parrot hung in a cage, in a small court under our window, and received the compliments and caresses of every one who passed. It is wonderful how fond the French are of holding conversation with animals of all descriptions, parrots, dogs, monkeys. Is it that they choose to have all the talk to themselves, to make propositions, and fancy the answers; that they like this discourse by signs, by *jabbering*, and gesticulation, or that the manifestation of the principle of life without thought delights them above all things? The sociableness of the French seems to expand itself beyond the level of humanity, and to be unconscious of any descent. Two boys in the kitchen appeared to have nothing to do but to beat up the white of eggs into froth for salads. The labour of the French costs them nothing, so that they readily throw it away in doing nothing or the merest trifles. A nice-looking girl who officiated as chamber-maid, brought in a ripe melon after dinner, and offering it with much grace and good humour as "un petit cadeau" (a trifling present) was rather hurt we did not accept of it.

Indeed it was wrong. A Mr. James Williams acted as our English interpreter while we staid, and procured us places in the Paris Diligence, though it was said to be quite full. We here also heard that the packet we came over in, blew up two days after, and that the passengers escaped in fishing-boats. This has completed my distaste to steam-boats.

The city of Rouen is one of the oldest and finest in France. It contains about a hundred thousand inhabitants, two noble churches; a handsome quay is embosomed in a range of lofty hills, and watered by the Seine, which, proud of its willowy banks and tufted islands, winds along by it. The ascent up the rising grounds behind it, is magnificent beyond description. The town is spread out at your feet (an immense, stately mass of dark grey stone), the double towers of the old Gothic Cathedral, and of the beautiful Church of St. Antoine, rise above it in their majestic proportions, overlooking the rich sunny valleys which stretch away in the distance; you gradually climb an amphitheatre of hills, sprinkled with gardens and villas to the very top, and the walk on Sunday afternoon is crowded with people enjoying the scene, adding to its animation by their intelligent, varying looks, and adorning it by their picturesque and richly-coloured dresses. There is no town in England at the same time so fine, and so finely situated. Oxford is as fine in its buildings and associations, but it has

not the same advantages of situation: Bristol is as fine a mass of buildings, but without the same striking accompaniments—

"The pomp of groves and garniture of fields."

Edinburgh alone is as splendid in its situation and buildings, and would have even a more imposing and delightful effect if Arthur's Seat were crowned with thick woods, if the Pentland-hills could be converted into green pastures, if the Scotch people were French, and Leith-walk planted with vineyards! The only blot in this fair scene was the meeting with a number of cripples, whose hideous cries attracted and alarmed attention before their formidable mutilations became visible, and who extorted charity rather from terror than pity. Such objects abound in France and on the Continent. Is it from the want of hospitals, or from the bad care taken of the young and necessitous, to whom some dreadful accident has happened?—The hill that commands this beautiful prospect, and seems the resort of health, of life, and pleasure, is called (as I found on inquiry) *Mont des Malades!* Would any people but the French think of giving it so inauspicious a title? To the English such a name would spoil the view, and infect the imagination with the recollections of pain and sickness. But a Frenchman's imagination is proof against such weaknesses; he has no sympathy except with the pleasurable; and provided a hill presents an agreeable prospect, never troubles his head whether the inha-

bitants are sick or well. The streets of Rouen, like those of other towns in France, are dirty for the same reason. A Frenchman's senses and understanding are alike inaccessible to pain—he recognises (happily for himself) the existence only of that which adds to his importance or his satisfaction. He is delighted with perfumes, but passes over the most offensive smells*, and will not lift up his little finger to remove

* One would think that a people so devoted to perfumes, who deal in essences and scents, and have fifty different sorts of snuffs, would be equally nice, and offended at the approach of every disagreeable odour. Not so. They seem to have no sense of the disagreeable in smells or tastes, as if their heads were stuffed with a cold, and hang over a dunghill, as if it were a bed of roses, or swallow the most detestable dishes with the greatest relish. The nerve of their sensibility is bound up at the point of pain. A Frenchman (as far as I can find) has no idea answering to the word *nasty;* or if he has, feels a predilection for, instead of an aversion to, it. So in morals they bid fair to be the *Sybarites* of the modern world. They make the best of every thing (which is a virtue)—and treat the worst with levity or complaisance (which is a vice). They harbour no antipathies. They would swallow Gil Blas's supper as a luxury, and boast of it afterwards as a feat. Their moral system is not sustained by the two opposite principles of attraction and repulsion, for they are shocked at nothing: what excites horror or disgust in other minds, they consider as a *bagatelle;* it is resolved into an abstraction of agreeable sensations, a source of amusement. There is an oil of self-complacency in their constitutions, which takes the sting out of evil, and neutralizes the poison of corruption. They, therefore, can commit atrocities with impunity, and wallow in dis-

a general nuisance, for it is none to him. He leaves the walls of his houses unfinished, dilapidated, almost uninhabitable, because his thoughts are bent on adorning his own person—on jewels, trinkets, *pomade divine!* He is elaborate in his cookery and his dress, because the one flatters his vanity, the other his appetite; and he is licentious in his pleasures, nay gross in his manners, because in the first he consults only his immediate gratification, and in the last annoys others continually, from having no conception that any thing he (a Frenchman) can do can possibly annoy them. He is sure to offend, because he takes it for granted he must please. A great deal of ordinary French conversation might be spared before foreigners, if they knew the pain it gives. Virtue is not only put out of countenance by it, but vice becomes an indifferent *common-place* in their mouths. The last stage of human depravity is, when vice ceases to shock—or to please. A Frenchman's candour and indifference to what must be thought of him (combined with his inordinate desire to shine) are curious. The hero of his own little tale carries a load of crimes and misfortunes at his back like a lead of band-boxes, and (light-hearted wretch) sings and dances as he goes! The

grace without a blush, as no other people can. There is Monsieur Chateaubriand, for instance. Who would not suppose that the very echo of his own name would hoot him out of the world? So far from it, his pamphlet *On the Censorship* has just come to a third edition, and is stuck all over Paris!

inconsequentiality in the French character, from extreme facility and buoyancy of impression, is a matter of astonishment to the English. A young man at Rouen was walking briskly along the street to church, all the way tossing his prayer-book into the air, when suddenly on reaching the entrance a priest appeared coming from church, and he fell on his knees on the steps. No wonder the Popish clergy stand up for their religion, when it makes others fall on their knees before them, and worship their appearance as the shadow of the Almighty! The clergy in France present an agreeable and almost necessary foil to the foibles of the national character, with their sombre dress, their gravity, their simplicity, their sanctity. It is not strange they exert such an influence there: their professional pretensions to learning and piety must have a double weight, from having nothing to oppose to them but frivolity and the impulse of the moment. The entering the Cathedral here after the bustle and confusion of the streets, is like entering a vault—a tomb of worldly thoughts and pleasures, pointing to the skies. The slow and solemn movements of the Priests, as grave as they are unmeaning, resemble the spells of necromancers; the pictures and statues of the dead contrast strangely with the faces of the living; the chaunt of the Priests sounds differently from the jargon of the common people; the little oratories and cells; with some lone mourner kneeling before a crucifix, every thing leads the

thoughts to another world, to death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come. The walls and ornaments of this noble pile are left in a state of the most lamentable neglect, and the infinite number of paltry, rush-bottomed chairs, huddled together in the aisle, are just like the rubbish of a broker's shop. The great bell of the Cathedral is the most deep-mouthed I ever heard, "swinging slow with sullen roar," rich and sonorous, and hoarse with counting the flight of a thousand years. It is worth while to visit France, were it only to see Rouen.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROAD TO PARIS.—They vaunt much of the *Lower Road* from Rouen to Paris; but it is not so fine as that from Dieppe to Rouen. You have comparatively few trees, the soil is less fertile, and you are (nearly the whole way) tantalized with the vast, marshy-looking plains of Normandy, with the Seine glittering through them like a snake, and a chain of abrupt chalky hills, like a wall or barrier bounding them. There is nothing I hate like a distant prospect without any thing interesting in it—it is continually dragging the eye a wearisome journey, and repaying it with barrenness and deformity. Yet a Frenchman contrived to make a panegyric on this scene, after the fashion of his countrymen, and with that sort of tripping jerk which is peculiar to their minds and bodies—"*Il y a de l'eau, il y a des bois, il y a des montagnes, il y a de la verdure,*" &c. It is true, there were all these things in the abstract, or as so many detached particulars to make a speech about, which was all that he wanted. A Frenchman's eye for nature is merely *nominal*. I find that with the novelty, or on farther experience my enthusiasm for the country and the

people, palls a little. During a long day's march (for I was too late, or rather too ill to go by the six o'clock morning Diligence,) I got as tired of toiling on under a scorching sun and over a dusty road, as if I had been in England. Indeed, I could almost have fancied myself there, for I scarcely met with a human being to remind me of the difference. I at one time encountered a horseman mounted on a *demipique* saddle, in a half military uniform, who seemed determined to make me turn out of the foot-path*, or to ride over me. This looked a little English, though the man did not. I should take him for an Exciseman. I suppose in all countries people on horseback give themselves airs of superiority over those who are on foot. The French character is not altogether compounded of the amiable, any more than the English is of the respectable. In judging of nations, it will not do to deal in mere abstractions. In countries, as well as individuals, there is a mixture of good and bad qualities; yet we may attempt to strike a general balance, and compare the rules with the exceptions. Soon after my equestrian adventure (or escape,) I met with another pleasanter one; a little girl, with regular features and dark eyes, dressed in white, and with a large straw bonnet flapping over her face, was mounted behind a youth, who seemed to be a relation, on an ass—a common mode of conveyance in this country.

* This is not correct; there is no foot-path in France, but there is a side-path, claiming, I presume, the same privileges.

The young lad was trying to frighten her, by forcing the animal out of its usual easy pace into a canter, while she, holding fast, and between laughing and crying, called out in a voice of great sweetness and *naïveté*—"*Il n'est pas bon trotter, il n'est pas bon trotter.*" There was a playfulness in the expression of her terrors quite charming, and quite French. They turned down an avenue to a villa a little way out of the road. I could not help looking after them, and thinking what a delightful welcome must await such innocence, such cheerfulness, and such dark sparkling eyes! *Mais allons.* These reflections are perhaps misplaced: France is not at present altogether the land of gallantry or sentiment, were one ever so much disposed to them.

Within half a mile of Louviers (which is seven leagues from Rouen) a Diligence passed me on the road at the full speed of a French Diligence, rolling and rumbling on its way over a paved road, with five clumsy-looking horses, and loaded to the top like a Plymouth van. I was to stop at Louviers, at the Hotel de Mouton, and to proceed to Paris by the coach the next day; for I was told there was no conveyance onwards that day, and I own that this apparition of a Diligence in full sail, and in broad day (when I had understood there were none but night coaches) surprised me. I was going to set it down in "my tables," that there is no faith to be placed in what they say at French inns. I quickened my

pace in hopes of overtaking it while it changed horses. The main street of Louviers appeared to me very long and uneven. On turning a corner, the Hotel de Mouton opened its gates to receive me, the Diligence was a little farther on, with fresh horses just put to and ready to start (a critical and provoking dilemma;) I hesitated a moment, and at last resolved to take my chance in the Diligence, and seeing Paris written on the outside, and being informed by *Monsieur le Conducteur*, that I could stop at Evreux for the night, I took the rest for granted, and mounted in the cabriolet, where sat an English gentleman (one of those with whom I had come over in the steam-boat,) solitary and silent. My seating myself in the opposite corner of the cabriolet (which is that part of a French Diligence which is placed in front, and resembles a post-chaise in form and ease,) did not break the solitude or the silence. In company, *two negatives do not make an affirmative.* I know few things more delightful than for two Englishmen to loll in a post-chaise in this manner, taking no notice of each other, preserving an obstinate silence, and determined to send their country *to Coventry**. We pretended not to recognise each other, and yet our saying nothing proved every instant that we were not French. At length, about half way, my companion opened his lips, and asked in thick, broken French, "How far it was to Evreux?" I

* "There is nothing which an Englishman enjoys so much as the pleasure of sulkiness."—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 80.

looked at him, and said in English, "I did not know." Not another word passed, yet, I dare say, both of us had a very agreeable time of it, as the Diligence moved on to Evreux, making reflections on the national character, and each thinking himself an exception to its absurdities, an instance of its virtues; so easy is it always (and more particularly abroad) to fancy ourselves free from the errors we witness in our neighbours. It is this, indeed, which makes us so eager to detect them, as if to see what is wrong was the same thing as being in the right!

At Evreux, I found I had gone quite out of my road, and that there was no conveyance to Paris till the same hour the next night. I was a good deal mortified and perplexed at this intelligence, but found some consolation at the Office where I obtained it, from casually hearing the name of my companion, which is a great point gained in travelling. Of course, the discovery is pleasant, if it is a name you are acquainted with; or if not, at least you have the satisfaction of knowing it is some one you do *not* know, and so are made easy on that head. I bespoke a bed, and was shewn into the common room, where I took coffee, and had what the Scotch call a *brandered fowl* for supper. The room was papered with marine landscapes, so that you seemed sitting in the open air with boats and trees and the sea-shore all round you, and Telemachus and Calypso, figures landing or embarking on halcyon seas. Even a country-inn in

France is classical. It is a pity that the English are so dull and sluggish, "like the fat weed that roots itself at ease on Lethe's wharf," that they cannot lend themselves to these airy fictions, always staring them in the face, but rather turn away from them with an impatience and disgust proportioned to the elegance of the design and the tax levied on their taste. A Frenchman's imagination, on the contrary, is always at the call of his senses. The latter have but to give the hint, and the former is glad to take it! I tired every one out by inquiring my best mode of getting on to Paris next day; and being slow to believe that my only way was to go back to Louviers, like a fool as I had come, a young Frenchman took compassion on my embarrassment, and offered to be my interpreter, "as he spoke both languages." He said, "I must feel great pain in not being able to express myself." I said "None but in giving others the trouble to understand me." He shook his head, I spoke much too fast for him; he apologized for not being able to follow me from want of habit, though he said, "he belonged to a society of twelve at Paris, where they spoke English every evening generally." I said, "we were well matched," and when this was explained to him, he repeated the word "*matched*," with a ludicrous air of distress, at finding that there was an English phrase which was not familiarised to him in "the society of twelve, where they spoke the English language gene-

rally every evening." We soon came to a dead stand, and he turned to my English companion in the cabriolet, on whom he bestowed, for the rest of the evening, the tediousness of any "society of twelve." I could not help laughing to see my luckless fellow-countryman, after one or two attempts to rally and exchange remarks, reduced to the incessant repetition of his melancholy "*oui*," and my lively Parisian rioting in the advantage he had obtained over a straggling Englishman, gliding from topic to topic without contradiction or control, passing from the population of Paris to the *Beaux-Arts*, from the Belles-Lettres to politics, running the circle of knowledge, and finding himself still at home, faltering at the mention of the Allies and the Bourbons, and rising with outstretched arm and continuous voice at the name of *Buonopar-r* (like the eagle soaring on level wing)—getting nearer and nearer the victim of his volubility, seizing my poor friend by the button, and at last retiring abruptly, as if afraid of a re-action, and wishing him "good repose" for the evening. Happy member of a "society of twelve!" Apt representative of thirty millions of people, who build their self-esteem on the basis of vanity, and weave happiness out of breath, which costs them nothing! Why envy, why wish to interrupt them, like a mischievous school-boy, who throws a great stone into a pond full of frogs who croak their delights "gene-

rally every evening," and who, the instant the chasm is closed, return to the charge with unabated glee and joyous dissonance!

I must not forget to mention a favourable trait in the common French character. I asked to speak to the *Conducteur*, and something like a charge of deception was brought, from which he defended himself strenuously. The whole kitchen and stable-yard gathered round to hear a dispute, which was by no means waged with equal war of words. They understood that I was disappointed, and had made a ridiculous mistake. Not a word or look of derision was observable in the whole group; but rather a rising smile, suppressed for fear of giving pain, and a wish to suggest some expedient on the occasion. In England, I will venture to say, that a Frenchman, in similar circumstances, stammering out a grave charge of imposition against a coachman, and evidently at a loss how to proceed, would have been hooted out of the place, and it would have been well for him if he had escaped without broken bones. If the French have the vices of artificial refinement and effeminacy, the English still retain too many of those which belong to a barbarous and savage state.

I returned to Louviers the next morning under the safe conduct of my former guide, where I arrived half an hour before the necessary time, found myself regularly booked for Paris, with five francs paid on account; and after a very comfortable breakfast,

where I was waited on by a pretty, modest-looking *brunette* (for the French country-girls are in general modest-looking,) I took my seat in the *fourth place* of the Diligence. Here I met with every thing to annoy an Englishman. There was a Frenchman in the coach, who had a dog and a little boy with him, the last having a doll in his hands, which he insisted on playing with; or cried and screamed furiously if it was taken from him. It was a true French child; that is, a little old man, like Leonardo da Vinci's *Laughing Boy*, with eyes glittering like the glass ones of his favourite doll, with flaxen ringlets like her's, with cheeks as smooth and unhealthy, and a premature expression of cunning and self-complacency. A disgreeable or ill-behaved child in a stage coach is a common accident, and to be endured. But who but a Frenchman would think of carrying his dog? He might as well drag his horse into the coach after him. A Frenchman (with leave be it spoken) has no need to take a dog with him to ventilate the air of a coach, in which there are three other Frenchmen. It was impossible to suffer more from heat, from pressure, or from the periodical "exhalation of rich-distilled perfumes." If the French have lost the sense of smell, they should reflect (as they are a reflecting people) that others have not. Really, I do not see how they have a right in a public vehicle to assault one in this way by proxy, any more than to take one literally by the nose. One does not expect from the most refined and

polished people in Europe grossnesses that an Esquimaux Indian would have too much sense and modesty to be guilty of. If the presence of their dogs is a nuisance, the conversation of their masters is often no less offensive to another sense—both are suffocating to every body but themselves, and worthy of each other. Midas whispered his secret to the reeds, that whispered it again. The French, if they are wise, ought not to commit the national character on certain delicate points in the manner they do. While they were triumphant, less caution might be necessary: but no people can afford at the same time to be odious as well as contemptible in the eyes of their enemies. We dined at Mantes, where the ordinary was plentiful and excellent, and where a gentleman of a very prepossessing appearance took up the conversation (descanting on the adventures of a shooting-party the day before) in that gay, graceful, and animated tone, which I conceive to be characteristic of the best French society. In talking and laughing, he discovered (though a young man) the inroads which hot soups and high-seasoned ragouts had made in his mouth, with the same alacrity and good-humour as if he had to shew a complete set of the whitest teeth. We passed an interesting village, situated on the slope of a hill, with a quaint old tower projecting above it, and over-hanging the Seine. Not far from the high road stands Rosny, once the seat of the celebrated Sully. The approach to the capital on the side of

St. Germain's is one continued succession of imposing beauty and artificial splendour, of groves, of avenues, of bridges, of palaces, and of towns like palaces, all the way to Paris, where the sight of the Thuilleries completes the triumph of external magnificence, and oppresses the soul with recollections not to be borne or to be expressed!—Of them, perhaps, hereafter.

In the coach coming along, a Frenchman was curious to learn of a Scotch gentleman, who spoke very respectable French, whether Lord Byron was much regretted in England? He said there was much beauty in his writings, but too much straining after effect. He added, that there was no attempt at effect in Racine. This with the French is a final appeal in matters of poetry and taste. A translation of Lord Byron's Works complete is common in all the shops here. I am not sure whether an English Poet ought to be proud of this circumstance or not. I also saw an *Elegy on his Death* advertised, said to be written by his friend, Sir Thomas More. How oddly the French combine things! There is a Sir Thomas More in English History and Letters; but *that* Sir Thomas More is not *this* Mr. Thomas Moore—"let their discreet hearts believe it!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE first thing I did when I got to Paris was to go to the Louvre. It was indeed "first and last and midst" in my thoughts. Well might it be so, for it had never been absent from them for twenty years. I had gazed myself almost blind in looking at the precious works of art it then contained—should I not weep myself blind in looking at them again, after a lapse of half a life—or on finding them gone, and with them gone all that I had once believed and hoped of human kind? What could ever fill up that blank in my heart, fearful to think upon—fearful to look upon? I was no longer young; and he who had collected them, and "worn them as a rich jewel in his Iron Crown," was dead, a captive and vanquished; and with him all we who remained were "thrown into the pit," the lifeless bodies of men, and wore round our necks the collar of servitude, and on our foreheads the brand, and in our flesh and in our souls the stain of thraldom and of the born slaves of Kings. Yet thus far had I come once more "to dream and be an Emperour!" Thou sacred shrine of God-like magnificence, must not my heart fail and my feet stumble, as I approach

thee? How gladly would I kneel down and kiss thy threshold; and crawl into thy presence, like an Eastern slave! For here still linger the broken remains and the faded splendour of that proud monument of the triumphs of art and of the majesty of man's nature over the mock-majesty of thrones! Here Genius and Fame dwell together; '*School* calleth unto *School*,' and mighty names answer to each other; that old gallery points to the long, dim perspective of waning years, and the shadow of Glory and of Liberty is seen afar off. In pacing its echoing floors, I hear the sound of the footsteps of my youth, and the dead start from their slumbers! . . . In all the time that I had been away from thee, and amidst all the changes that had happened in it, did I ever forget, did I ever profane thee? Never for a moment or in thought have I swerved from thee, or from the cause of which thou wert the pledge and crown. Often have I sought thee in sleep, and cried myself awake to find thee, with the heart-felt yearnings of intolerable affection. Still didst thou haunt me, like a passionate dream—like some proud beauty, the queen and mistress of my thoughts. Neither pain nor sickness could wean me from thee—

"My theme in crowds, my solitary pride."

In the tangled forest or the barren waste—in the lowly hovel or the lofty palace, thy roofs reared their vaulted canopy over my head, a loftier palace, an ampler space—a "brave o'er-hanging firmament,"

studded with constellations of art. Wherever I was, thou wert with me, above me and about me; and didst "hang upon the beatings of my heart," a vision and a joy unutterable. There was one chamber of the brain (at least) which I had only to unlock and be master of boundless wealth—a treasure-house of pure thoughts and cherished recollections. Tyranny could not master, barbarism slunk from it; vice could not pollute, folly could not gainsay it. I had but to touch a certain spring, and lo! on the walls the divine grace of Guido appeared free from blemish—there were the golden hues of Titian, and Raphael's speaking faces, the splendour of Rubens, the gorgeous gloom of Rembrandt, the airy elegance of Vandyke, and Claude's classic scenes lapped the senses in Elysium, and Poussin breathed the spirit of antiquity over them. There, in that fine old lumber-room of the imagination, were the Transfiguration, and the St. Peter Martyr, with its majestic figures and its unrivalled landscape back-ground. There also were the two St. Jeromes, Domenichino's and Correggio's—there "stood the statue that enchants the world"—there were the Apollo and the Antinous, the Laocoon, the Dying Gladiator, Diana and her Fawn, and all the glories of the antique world—

> "There was old Proteus coming from the sea,
> And aged Triton blew his wreathed horn."

But Legitimacy did not "sit squat, like a toad," in one corner of it, poisoning the very air, and keeping the free-born spirit aloof from it!

There were one or two pictures (old favourites) that I wished to see again, and that I was told still remained. I longed to know whether they were there, and whether they would look the same. It was fortunate I arrived when I did; for a week later the doors would have been shut against me, on occasion of the death of the King. His bust is over the door, which I had nearly mistaken for a head of Memnon—or some Egyptian God. After passing through the modern French Exhibition (where I saw a picture by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and a vile farrago of *Bourbon-Restoration* pictures,) I came within sight of the Grand Gallery of the Louvre, which is at present only railed off. One or two English stragglers alone were in it. The coolness and stillness were contrasted with the bustle, the heat, and the smell of the common apartments. My thoughts rushed in and filled the empty space. Instead of the old Republican door-keepers, with their rough voices and affectation of equality, a servant in a court-livery stood at the gate. On presenting myself, I inquired if a Monsieur Livernois (who had formerly ushered me into this region of enchantment) were still there; but he was gone or dead. My hesitation and foreign accent, with certain other appeals, procured me admittance. I passed on without further question. I cast a glance forward, and found that the Poussins were there. At the sight of the first, which I distinctly recollected (a fine green landscape, with stately ruins,) the tears came into my eyes, and I passed an hour or two in that state of lux-

urious enjoyment, which is the highest privilege of the mind of man, and which perhaps makes him amends for many sorrows. To my surprise, instead of finding the whole changed, I found every thing nearly in its place, as I proceeded through the first compartments, which I did slowly, and reserving the Italian pictures for a *bon bouche*. The colours even seemed to have been mellowed, and to have grown to the walls in the last twenty years, as if the pictures had been fixed there by the cramping-irons of Victory, instead of hanging loose and fluttering, like so much tattered canvass, at the sound of English drums, and breath of Prussian manifestoes. Nothing could be better managed than the way in which they had blended the Claudes and Poussins alternately together—the ethereal refinement and dazzling brilliancy of the one relieving and giving additional zest to the sombre, grave, massive character of the other. Claude Lorraine pours the spirit of air over all objects, and new-creates them of light and sun-shine. In several of his masterpieces which are shewn here, the vessels, the trees, the temples and middle distances glimmer between air and solid substance, and seem moulded of a new element in nature. No words can do justice to their softness, their precision, their sparkling effect. But they do not lead the mind out of their own magic circle. They repose on their own beauty; they fascinate with faultless elegance. Poussin's landscapes are more properly pictures of time than of place.

They have a fine *moral* perspective, not inferior to Claude's aërial one. They carry the imagination back two or four thousand years at least, and bury it in the remote twilight of history. There is an opaqueness and solemnity in his colouring, assimilating with the tone of long-past events: his buildings are stiff with age; his implements of husbandry are such as would belong to the first rude stages of civilization; his harvests are such (as in the Ruth and Boaz) as would yield to no modern sickle; his grapes (as in the Return from the Promised Land) are a load to modern shoulders; there is a simplicity and undistinguishing breadth in his figures; and over all, the hand of time has drawn its veil. Poussin has his faults; but, like all truly great men, there is that in him which is to be found nowhere else; and even the excellences of others would be defects in him. One picture of his in particular drew my attention, which I had not seen before. It is an addition to the Louvre, and makes up for many a flaw in it. It is the Adam and Eve in Paradise, and it is all that Mr. Martin's picture of that subject is not. It is a scene of sweetness and seclusion, "to cure all sadness but despair." There is the freshness of the first dawn of creation, immortal verdure, the luxuriant budding growth of unpruned Nature's gifts, the stillness and the privacy, as if there were only those two beings in the world, made for each other, and with this world of beauty for the scene of their delights. It is a Heaven de-

scended upon earth, as if the finger of God had planted the garden with trees and fruits and flowers, and his hand had watered it! One fault only can be found by the critical eye. Perhaps the scene is too flat. If the "verdurous wall of Paradise" had upreared itself behind our first parents, it would have closed them in more completely, and would have given effect to the blue hills that gleam enchantment in the distance. Opposite, "in darkness visible," hangs the famous landscape of the Deluge by the same master-hand, a leaden weight on the walls with the ark "*huling*" on the distant flood, the sun labouring, wan and faint, up the sky, and the heavens, "blind with rain," pouring down their total cisterns on the weltering earth. Men and women and different animals are struggling with the wide-spread desolation; and trees, climbing the sides of rocks, seem patiently awaiting it above. One would think Lord Byron had transcribed his admirable account of the Deluge in his *Heaven and Earth* from this noble picture, which is in truth the very poetry of painting.—One here finds also the more unequivocal productions of the French school (for Claude and Poussin* were in a

* We may trace something of their national origin in both their minds. In Claude there is the French *finicalness*, and love of minute details; but there is a *fusion* of all these into the most perfect harmony from the influence of a southern sky, and he has none of the flimsiness or littleness of effect, to which his countrymen are prone. Again, it cannot be denied that there is a certain setness and for-

great measure Italian,) Le Brun, Sebastian Bourdon, some of Le Sueur's expressive faces, and the bland expansive style of Philip Champagne—no mean name in the history of art. See, in particular, the exquisite picture of the Sick Nun, (the Nun was his own daughter, and he painted this picture as a present to the Convent, in gratitude for her recovery,)—and another of a Religious Communion, with attendants in rich dresses.

One finds no considerable gap, till one comes to the Antwerp pictures; and this yawning chasm is not ill supplied by the Luxembourg pictures, those splendid solecisms of Rubens's art. Never was exhibited a greater union of French flutter and Gothic grace, of borrowed absurdity and inherent power. He has made a strange jumble of the Heathen mythology,

mality, a *didactic* or prosing vein in Nicolas Poussin's compositions. He proceeds on system, has a deliberate purpose to make out, and is often laboured, monotonous, and extravagant. His pictures are the finest subjects in the world for French criticism—to point the moral, or detach an episode. He is somewhat pedantic and over-significant, in the manner of French orators and poets. He had, like his countrymen, no great eye for nature or truth of expression; but he had what they chiefly want—*imagination*, or the power of placing himself in the circumstances of others. Poussin, in fact, held a middle place between Raphael and other painters of the Italian school, who have embodied the highest poetry of expression, and the common run of French artists, whose utmost stretch of invention reaches no farther than correctness in the costume and chronology of their subject.

his own wives, and the mistresses of Louis XIII. His youthful Gods are painted all light and air, and figure in quaintly enough, with some flaunting Dowager dressed in the height of the fashion in the middle of the 17th century, or with some strapping quean (his queens are queans) with her robes of rich stuffs slipping off her shoulders, and displaying limbs that, both for form and hue, provoke any feeling but indifference. His groups spring from the bold licentious hand of genius; and decorated in the preposterous finery of courtly affectation, puzzle the sense. I do not think with David (the celebrated French painter) that they ought to be burnt, but he has himself got possession of their old places in the Luxembourg, and perhaps he is tolerably satisfied with this arrangement. A landscape with a rainbow by Rubens (a rich and dazzling piece of colouring) that used to occupy a recess half-way down the Louvre, was removed to the opposite side. The singular picture (the Defeat of Goliath, by Daniel Volterra,) painted on both sides on slate, still retained its station in the middle of the room. It had hung there for twenty years unmolested. The Rembrandts keep their old places, and are as fine as ever, with their rich enamel, their thick lumps of colour, their startling gloom, and bold execution—their ear-rings, their gold-chains, and fur-collars, on which one is disposed to lay furtive hands, so much have they the look of wealth and substantial use! The Vandykes are more light and airy than ever. There

is a whole heap of them; and among the rest that charming portrait of an English lady with a little child (as fine and true a compliment as was ever paid to the English female character,) sustained by sweetness and dignity, but with a mother's anxious thoughts passing slightly across her serene brow. The Cardinal Bentivoglio (which I remember procuring especial permission to copy, and left untouched, because, after Titian's portraits, there was a want of interest in Vandyke's which I could not get over,) is not there*. But in the Dutch division, I found Weenix's game, the battle-pieces of Wouvermans, and Ruysdael's sparkling woods and waterfalls without number. On these (I recollect as if it were yesterday) I used, after a hard day's work, and having tasked my faculties to the utmost, to cast a mingled glance of surprise and pleasure, as the light gleamed upon them through the high casement, and to take leave of them with a *non equidem invideo, miror magis.*

In the third or Italian division of the Gallery, there is a profusion of Albanos, with Cupids and naked Nymphs, which are quite in the old French taste. They are certainly very pleasing compositions, but from the change produced by time, the figures shew like beauty-spots on a dark ground. How inferior is he to Guido, the painter of grace and sentiment, two of whose master-pieces enchanted me anew, the Annunciation and the Presentation in the Temple.

* It is at Florence.

In each of these there is a tenderness, a delicacy of expression like the purest affection, and every attitude and turn of a limb is conscious elegance and voluptuous refinement. The pictures, the mind of the painter, are instinct and imbued with beauty. It is worth while to have lived to have produced works like these, or even to have seen and felt their power! Painting of old was a language which its disciples used not merely to denote certain objects, but to unfold their hidden meaning, and to convey the finest movements of the soul into the limbs or features of the face. They looked at nature with a feeling of passion, with an eye to expression; and this it was that, while they sought for outward forms to communicate their feelings, moulded them into truth and beauty, and that surrounds them with an atmosphere of thought and sentiment. To admire a fine old picture is itself an act of devotion, and as we gaze, we turn idolaters. The moderns are chiefly intent on giving certain lines and colours, the *mask* or material face of painting, and leave out the immortal part of it. Thus a modern Exhibition Room (whether French or English) has a great deal of show and glitter, and a smell of paint in it. In the Louvre we are thrown back into the presence of our own best thoughts and feelings, the highest acts and emanations of the mind of man breathe from the walls, shadowy tears and sighs there keep vigils, and the air within it is divine!

The *ideal* is no less observable in the portraits than

in the histories here. Look at the portrait of a man in black, by Titian (No. 1210). There is a tongue in that eye, a brain beneath that forehead. It is still; but the hand seems to have been just placed on its side; it does not turn its head, but it looks towards you to ask, whether you recognise it or not? It was there to meet me, after an interval of years, as if I had parted with it the instant before. Its keen, steadfast glance staggered me like a blow. It was the same—how was I altered! I pressed towards it, as it were, to throw off a load of doubt from the mind, or as having burst through the obstacles of time and distance that had held me in torturing suspense. I do not know whether this is not the most striking picture in the room—the least *common-place*. There may be other pictures more delightful to look at; but this seems, like the eye of the Collection, to be looking at you and them. One might be tempted to go up and speak to it! The allegorical portrait of the Marchioness of Guasto is still here, transparent with tenderness and beauty—Titian's Mistress, that shines like a crystal mirror—the Entombing of Christ, solemn, harmonious as the coming on of evening—the Disciples at Emmaus—and the Crowning with Thorns, the blood here and there seeming ready to start through the flesh-colour, which even English artists have not known enough how to admire. The Young Man's Head, with a glove that used so much to delight, I confess, disappointed me, and I am convinced

must have been painted upon. There are other Titians, and a number of Raphaels—the Head of a Student muffled in thought—his own delightful Head (leaning on its hand) redolent of youthful genius, and several small Holy Families, full of the highest spirit and unction. There are also the three Marys with the Dead Body of Christ, by L. Caracci; the Salutation by Sebastian del Piombo; the noble Hunting-piece, by Annibal Caracci; the fine Landscapes of Domenichino (that in particular of the story of Hercules and Achelous, with the trunk of a tree left in the bed of a mountain-torrent); and a host besides, "thick as the autumnal leaves that strew the brooks in Vallombrosa," and of the same colour! There are so many of these select and favourite pictures left, that one does not all at once feel the loss of others which are more common in prints and in the mouth of fame; and the absence of which may be considered as almost an advantage for a first recognition and revival of old associations. But afterwards we find a want of larger pictures to answer to the magnitude of the Collection, and to sustain the balance of taste between the Italian and the other schools. We have here as fine Claudes and Poussins as any in the world, but not as fine Raphaels, Correggios, Domenichinos, as there are elsewhere,—as were once here. There are wanting, to make the gallery complete, six or eight capital pictures, the Transfiguration, the St. Peter Martyr, &c.; and among others (not already mentioned,) the Altar-

piece of St. Mark, by Tintoret, and Paul Veronese's Marriage at Cana. With these it had been perfect, "founded as the rock, as broad and general as the casing air;" without these it is "coop'd and cabin'd in by saucy doubts and fears." The largest Collection in the world ought to be colossal, not only in itself, but in its component parts. The Louvre is a quarter of a mile in length, and equal (as it is) to Mr. Angerstein's, the Marquess of Stafford's, the Dulwich Gallery, and Blenheim put together. It was once more than equal to them in every circumstance to inspire genius or console reflection. We still see the palace of the Thuilleries from the windows, with the white flag waving over it; but we look in vain for the Brazen Horses on its gates, or him who placed them there, or the pale bands of warriors that conquered in the name of liberty and of their country!

CHAPTER V.

THE gravity of the French character is a no less remarkable (though a less obvious) feature in it than its levity. The last is the quality that strikes us most by contrast to ourselves, and that comes most into play in the intercourse of common life; and therefore we are generally disposed to set them down as an altogether frivolous and superficial people. It is a mistake which we shall do well to correct on farther acquaintance with them; or if we persist in it, we must call to our aid an extraordinary degree of our native blindness and obstinacy. We ought never to visit their Theatres, to walk along their streets, to enter their houses, to look in their faces (when they do not think themselves observed,) to open their books, or take a view of their picture-galleries. Sterne seems to have been the first, as well as last traveller, who found out their weak side in this respect. "If the French have a fault, Monsieur Le Comte," says he, "it is that they are too serious." This contradiction in their character has been little noticed, and they have never had the credit of it, though it stares one in the face everywhere. How we are to piece the

two extremes together is another question. Is it that their whole character is a system of *inconsequentiality?* Or are they gay and trifling in serious matters, serious only in trifles? Or are their minds more of the cameleon-cast, that reflect all objects alike, whether grave or gay, and give themselves up entirely, and without resistance, to the prevailing impulse? Or is it owing to a want of comprehension, so that they are incapable of correcting one feeling by another, and thus run into extremes? Or that they have a greater scope and variety of resources, excelling us as much in gravity as in want of thought, outdoing us in tragedy and comedy, as they betake themselves to each, in the poetical or in the prosaic departments of life, only that they sometimes make a transposition of the two characters a little oddly, and pass from the one to the other without our well knowing why?

I have been frequently puzzled with this exception to the butterfly, airy, thoughtless, fluttering character of the French (on which we compliment ourselves,) and never more so than the first night I went to the theatre. The order, the attention, the decorum were such as would shame any London audience. The attention was more like that of a learned society to a lecture on some scientific subject, than of a promiscuous crowd collected together merely for amusement, and to pass away an idle hour. There was a professional air, an unvarying gravity in the looks and demeanour of the whole assembled multitude, as if every one had

an immediate interest in the character of the national poetry, in the purity of the French accent, in the propriety of the declamation, in the conceptions of the actor, and the developement of the story, instead of its presenting a mob of idle boys and girls, of ignorant gaping citizens, or supercilious box-lobby loungers, affecting a contempt for the performance, and for every one around them. The least noise or irregularity called forth the most instant and lively disapprobation; and the vivacity of the French character displayed itself to advantage in earnest gesticulations and expressions of impatience. Not only was the strictest silence observed, as soon as the curtain drew up, but no one moved or attempted to move. The spell thrown over the customary or supposed restlessness and volatility of the French was in this respect complete. The uniformity of the appearance was indeed almost ridiculous; for the rows of heads in the seats of the pit no more stirred or projected the breadth of a finger beyond the line, than those of a regiment of recruits on parade, or than if a soldier were stationed to keep each chin in its place. They may be reduced to the state of automatons; but there were no traces of the *monkey* character left*. If the performance had been *at Court*, greater propriety could not have been maintained; but it was a French play (one of Racine's) and acted before a

* Is not a monkey grave when it is doing nothing, or when it is not employed in mischief?

Parisian audience: this seemed to be enough to ensure it a proper reception. One would suppose, from their interest in dramatic representations, that the French were a nation of actors. Perhaps it may be asked, "Is not that the case? and is it not their vanity, their own desire to shine, or their sympathy with whatever or whoever is a candidate for applause, that accounts for their behaviour?" At least, their vanity makes them *grave;* and if it is this which rivets their attention, and silences their eternal loquacity, it must be allowed to produce effects which others would do well to imitate from better motives, if they have them*!

The play was not much; but there seemed to be an abstract interest felt in the stage as such, in the sound of the verse, in the measured step of the actors, in the recurrence of the same pauses, and of the same ideas; in the correctness of the costume, in the very notion of the endeavour after excellence, and in the creation of an artificial and imaginary medium of thought. If the French are more susceptible of immediate, sensible impressions, it would appear, judging from their behaviour at their own theatres, that they are also more sensible of reflex and refined ones. The bare suggestion of an interesting topic is to them interesting: it may be said, on the most distant intimation,

* The French phrase for *being present at a play* is, to *assist at it.* It must be owned that there is some appearance of truth in the expression.

to excite the most lively concern, aud to collect their scattered spirits into a focus. Their sensibility takes the alarm more easily; their understanding is quicker of hearing. With them, to the sublime or pathetic there is but one step—the *name;* the moment the subject is started, they "jump at" the catastrophe and all the consequences. We are slow, and must have a thing made out to us in striking instances, and by successive blows. We are sluggish, and must be lifted up to the heights of a factitious enthusiasm by the complicated machinery of a powerful imagination: we are obstinate, not to say selfish, and require to be urged over the abyss of mental anguish by the utmost violence of terror and pity. But with the French, all this is a matter of course, a verbal process. Tears, as well as smiles, cost them less than they do us. Words are more nearly allied to things in their minds; the one have a more vital being, though it does not follow that the other are altogether empty and barren of interest. But the French seem (in their dramatic exhibitions) not to wish to get beyond, or (shall I speak it more plainly?) to have no faculty for getting beyond the abstract conception, the naked proposition of the subject. They are a people (I repeat it) void and bare of the faculty of imagination, if by this we mean the power of placing things in the most novel and striking point of view; and they are so for this reason, that they have no need of it. It is to them a superfluity—a thankless toil. Their quick, discur-

sive apprehension runs on before, and anticipates and defeats the efforts of the highest poetry. They are contented to indulge in all the agony or ecstacy of sounding and significant common-places. The words *charming*, *delicious*, *indescribable*, &c. excite the same lively emotions in their minds as the most vivid representations of what is said to be so; and hence verbiage and the cant of sentiment fill the place, and stop the road to genius—a vague, flaccid, enervated rhetoric being too often substituted for the pith and marrow of truth and nature. The greatest facility to feel or to comprehend will not produce the most intense passion, or the most electrical expression of it. There must be a resistance in the matter to do this—a collision, an obstacle to overcome. The torrent rushes with fury from being impeded in its course: the lightning splits the gnarled oak. There is no malice in this statement; but I should think they may themselves allow it to be an English version of the truth, containing a great deal that is favourable to them, with a saving clause for our own use. The long (and to us tiresome) speeches in French tragedy consist of a string of emphatic and well-balanced lines, announcing general maxims and indefinite sentiments applicable to human life. The poet seldom commits any excesses by giving way to his own imagination, or identifying himself with individual situations and sufferings. We are not now raised to the height of passion, now plunged into its lowest depths; the whole

finds its level, like water, in the liquid, yielding susceptibility of the French character, and in the unembarrassed scope of the French intellect. The finest line in Racine, that is, in French poetry, is, by common consent understood to be the following:—

Craignez Dieu, mon cher Abner, et ne craignez que Dieu.

That is, *Fear God, my dear Abner, and fear only him.* A pious and just exhortation, it is true; but, when this is referred to as the highest point of elevation to which their dramatic genius has aspired, though we may not be warranted in condemning their whole region of poetry as a barren waste, we may consider it as very nearly a level plain, and assert, that though the soil contains mines of useful truths within its bosom and glitters with the graces of a polished style, it does not abound in picturesque points of view or romantic interest! It is certain that a thousand such lines would have no effect upon an English audience but to set them to sleep, like a sermon, or to make them commence a disturbance to avoid it. Yet, though the declamation of the French stage is as monotonous as the dialogue, the French listen to it with the tears in their eyes, holding in their breath, beating time to the cadence of the verse, and following the actors with a book in their hands for hours together. The English most assuredly do not pay the same attention to a play of Shakspeare's, or to any thing but a cock-fight or a sparring-match.

This is no great compliment to them; but it makes for the gravity of the French, who have mistaken didactic for dramatic poetry, who can sit out a play with the greatest patience and complacency, that an Englishman would hoot off the stage, or yawn over from beginning to end for its want of striking images and lively effect, and with whom Saturn is a God no less than Mercury! I am inclined to suspect the genius of their religion may have something to do with the genius of their poetry. The first absorbs in a manner their powers of imagination, their love of the romantic and the marvellous, and leaves the last in possession of their sober reason and moral sense. Their churches are theatres; their theatres are like churches. Their fancies are satiated with the mummeries and pageantry of the Catholic faith, with hieroglyphic obscurity and quaint devices; and, when they come to the tangible ground of human affairs, they are willing to repose alike from ornament and extravagance, in plain language and intelligible ideas. They go to mass in the morning to dazzle their senses, and bewilder their imagination, and inflame their enthusiasm; and they resort to the theatre in the evening to seek relief from superstitious intoxication in the prose of poetry, and from Gothic mysteries and gloom, in classic elegance and costume. Be this as it may, the love of the French for Racine is not a feeling of the moment, or left behind them at the theatres; they can quote him by heart, and his sen-

tentious, admirable lines occupy the next place in their minds to their *amatory poetry*. There is nothing unpleasant in a French theatre but a certain infusion of *soup-maigre* into the composition of the air, (so that one inhales a kind of thin pottage,) and an oily dinginess in the complexions both of the men and women, which shews more by lamp-light. It is not true (as has been said) that their theatres are nearly dark, or that the men stand in the pit. It is true, none but men are admitted into it, but they have seats just the same as with us, and a curious custom of securing their places when they go out, by binding their handkerchiefs round them, so that at the end of the play the benches presented nothing but a row of knotted pocket handkerchiefs. Almost every one returned and sat out the entertainment, which was not a farce, but a sentimental comedy, and a very charming one too, founded on the somewhat national subject of a seduction by an English nobleman in France, and in which the fair sufferer was represented by a young *debutante*, in natural expression and pathos little inferior to Miss Kelly, (as far as we can translate French into English nature,) but fatter and prettier. So much for their taste in theatricals, which does not incline wholly to puppet-shows and gew-gaws. The Theatre, in short, is the Throne of the French character, where it is mounted on its pedestal of pride, and seen to every advantage. I like to contemplate it there, for it reconciles me to them and to myself. It is a common

and amicable ground on which we meet. Their tears are such as others shed—their interest in what happened three thousand years ago is not exclusively French. They are no longer a distinct race or *caste*, but human beings. To feel towards others as of a different species, is not the way to increase our respect for ourselves or human nature. Their defects and peculiarities, we may be almost sure, have corresponding opposite vices in us—the excellences are confined pretty much to what there is in common.

The ordinary prejudice entertained on this subject in England is, that the French are little better than grown children—

"Pleas'd with a feather—tickled with a straw—"

full of grimace and noise and shew, lively and pert, but with no turn or capacity for serious thought or continued attention of any kind, and hardly deserving the name of rational beings, any more than apes or jack-daws. They may laugh and talk more than the English; but they read, and, I suspect, think more, taking them as a people. You see an apple-girl in Paris, sitting at a stall with her feet over a stove in the coldest weather, or defended from the sun by an umbrella, reading Racine or Voltaire. Who ever saw such a thing in London as a barrow-woman reading Shakspeare or Fielding? You see a handsome, smart *grisette* at the back of every little shop or counter in Paris, if she is not at work, reading perhaps one of Marmontel's Tales, with all the absorption and deli-

cate interest of a heroine of romance. Yet we make doleful complaints of the want of education among the common people, and of the want of reflection in the female character in France. There is something of the same turn for reading in Scotland; but then where is the gaiety or the grace? They are more sour and formal even than the English. The book-stalls all over Paris present a very delightful appearance. They contain neatly-bound, cheap, and portable editions of all their standard authors, which of itself refutes the charge of a want of the knowledge or taste for books. The French read with avidity whenever they can snatch the opportunity. They read standing in the open air, into which they are driven by the want of air at home. They read in garrets and in cellars. They read at one end of a counter, when a person is hammering a lock or a piece of cabinet-work at the other, without taking their eye from the book, or picking a quarrel with the person who is making the noise. Society is the school of education in France; there is a transparency in their intellects as in their atmosphere, which makes the communication of thought or sound more rapid and general. The *farina* of knowledge floats in the air, and circulates at random. Alas! it "quickens, even with blowing." A perriwig-maker is an orator; a fish-woman is a moralist; a woman of fashion is a metaphysician, armed with all the topics; a pretty woman in Paris, who was not also a *blue-stocking*, would

make little figure in the circles. It would be in vain for her to know how to dispose a knot of ribands or a bunch of flowers in her hair, unless she could arrange a critical and analytical argument in all the forms. It is nothing against her, if she excels in personal and mental accomplishments at the same time. This turn for literary or scientific topics in the women may indeed be accounted for in part from the modes of social intercourse in France; but what does this very circumstance prove, but that an interchange of ideas is considered as one great charm in the society between men and women, and that the thirst of knowledge is not banished by a grosser passion? Knowledge and reason, however, descend; and where the women are philosophers, the men are not quite blockheads or *petit-maitres*. They are far from being the ignorant smatterers that we pretend. They are not backward at asking for reasons, nor slow in giving them. They have a theory for every thing, even for vice and folly. Their faces again are grave and serious when they are by themselves, as they are gay and animated in society. Their eyes have a vacant, absent stare; their features set or lengthen all at once into "the melancholy of Moorditch." The *Conducteur* of the Diligence from Rouen confirmed me agreeably in my theory of the philosophical character of the French physiognomy. With large grey eyes and drooping eye-lids, prominent distended nostrils, a fine Fenelon expression of countenance, and a mouth

open and eloquent, with furrowed lines twisted round it like whip-cord, he stood on the steps of the coach, and harangued to the gentlemen within on the *bêtise* of some *voyageur Anglois* with the air of a professor, and in a deep sonorous voice, worthy of an oration of Bossuet. I should like to hear a Yorkshire guard, with his bluff, red face, bristly bullet head, little peering eyes, round shoulders, and squeaking voice, ascend into an imaginary rostrum in this manner, wave a florid speculation in one hand, and hold fast by the coach-door with the other, or get beyond an oath, a hearty curse, or his shrewd country gibberish! The face of the French soldiery is a face of great humanity—it is manly, sedate, thoughtful—it is equally free from fierceness and stupidity; and it seems to bear in its eye defeat and victory, the eagle and the lilies! I cannot help adding here, that a French gentleman (*un Rentier*) who lodges in the hotel opposite to me, passes his time in reading all the morning, dines, plays with his children after dinner, and takes a hand at backgammon with an old *gouvernante* in the evening. He does not figure away with a couple of horses in the streets like our English *jockeys* (who really are nothing without a footman behind them,) nor does his wife plague his life out to run after all the new sights. And yet they are from the country. This looks like domestic comfort and internal resources. How many disciples of Rosseau's *Emilius* are there in France at the present day? I knew one twenty years ago.

The French are a people who practise the arts and sciences naturally. A shoe-black is the *artiste du jour* (artist of the day,) and a rat-catcher approaches you under some insidious *nom de guerre*. Every thing is with them imposing, grave, important. "Except (it may be said) what really is so;" and it may be insinuated, that all their pretensions are equally idle mockery and grimace. Look, then, at their works of science and of art—the one the most comprehensive and exact, the other the most laborious and finished in the world. What are their chemists, their astronomers, their naturalists, their painters, their sculptors? If not the greatest and most inventive geniuses, the most accurate compilers, and the most severe students in their several departments. La Place, Lavoisier, Cuvier, David, Houdon, are not triflers or pretenders. In science, if we have discovered the principles, they have gone more into the details—in art we accuse them of being over-laboured, and of finishing too minutely and mechanically; and they charge us (justly enough) with a want of *finesse*, and with producing little more than rude sketches and abortive caricatures. Their frigid, anatomical inquiries—their studies after the antique, and acquaintance with all the professional and scientific branches of their art, are notorious—and the care with which they work up their draperies and back-grounds is obvious to every one, and a standing subject of complaint and ridicule to English artists and critics. Their refinement in

art, I confess, consists chiefly in an attention to rules and details, but then it does imply an attention to these, which is contrary to our idea of the flighty French character. I remember, some years ago, a young French artist in the Louvre, who was making a chalk-drawing of a small *Virgin and Child*, by Leonardo da Vinci, and he took eleven weeks to complete it, sitting with his legs astride over a railing, looking up and talking to those about him—consulting their opinion as to his unwearied imperceptible progress—going to the fire to warm his hands, and returning to *perfectionate himself!* There was a good deal of "laborious foolery" in all this, but still he kept on with it, and did not fly to fifty things one after the other. Another student had undertaken to copy the *Titian's Mistress*, and the method he took to do it was to parcel out his canvass into squares like an engraver; after which he began very deliberately, not with the face or hair, but with the first square in the right-hand corner of the picture, containing a piece of an old table. He did not care where he began, so that he went through the whole regularly. *C'est égal*, is the common reply in all such cases. This continuity of purpose, without any great effort or deep interest, surprises an Englishman. We can do nothing without a strong motive, and without violent exertion. But it is this very circumstance probably that enables them to proceed: they take the matter quite easily, and have not the same load of anxious thought to

bear up against, nor the same impatient eagerness to reach perfection at a single stride, to stop them midway. They have not the English air hanging at their backs, like the Old Man of the Sea at Sindbad's! The same freedom from any thing like morbid humour assists them to plod on like the Dutch from mere phlegm, or to diverge into a variety of pursuits, which is still more natural to them. Horace Vernet has in the present Exhibition a portrait of a lady, (a rival to Sir T. Lawrence's) and close to it, a battle-piece, equal to Ward or Cooper. Who would not be a Parisian born, to attain excellence with the wish to succeed from mere confidence or indifference to success, to unite such a number of accomplishments, or be equally satisfied without a single one!

The English are over-hasty in supposing a certain lightness and petulance of manner in the French to be incompatible with sterling thought or steady application, and flatter themselves that not to be merry is to be wise. A French lady who had married an Englishman remarkable for his dullness, used to apologise for his silence in company by incessantly repeating "*C'est toujours Locke, toujours Newton,*" as if these were the subjects that occupied his thoughts. It is well we have these names to appeal to in all cases of emergency; and as far as mere gravity is concerned, let these celebrated persons have been as wise as they would, they could not for the life of them have appeared duller or more stupid than

the generality of their countrymen. The chief advantage I can find in the English over the French comes to this, that though slower, if they once take a thing up, they are longer in laying it down, provided it is a grievance or a *sore subject.* The reason is, that the French do not delight in grievances or in sore subjects; and that the English delight in nothing else, and battle their way through them most manfully. Their *forte* is the disagreeable and repulsive. I think they would have fought the battle of Waterloo over again! The English, besides being "good haters," are dogged and downright, and have no salvos for their self-love. Their vanity does not heal the wounds made in their pride. The French, on the contrary, are soon reconciled to fate, and so enamoured of their own idea, that nothing can put them out of conceit with it. Whatever their attachment to their country, to liberty or glory, they are not so affected by the loss of these as to make any desperate effort or sacrifice to recover them. Their continuity of feeling is such, as to be no enemy to a whole skin. They over-ran Europe like tigers, and defended their own territory like deer. They are a nation of heroes—on this side of martyrdom!

CHAPTER VI.

DIALOGUE, FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

FRENCH.—Have you seen the whole of our *Exposition* of the present year?—

English.—No, but I have looked over a good part of it. I have been much pleased with many of the pictures. As far as I can judge, or have a right to say so, I think your artists have improved within these few years.

French.—Perhaps so, occasionally, but we have not David and some others.

English.—I cannot say that I miss him much. He had, I dare say, many excellences, but his faults were still more glaring, according to our insular notions of the art. Have you Guerin now? He had just brought out his first picture of Phædra and Hippolitus when I was in Paris formerly. It made a prodigious sensation at the time, and very great things were expected from him.

French.—No, his works are not much spoken of.

English.—The Hippolitus in the picture I speak of was very beautiful; but the whole appeared too much cast in the mould of the antique, and it struck me then that there was a *mannerism* about it that did

not augur favourably for his future progress, but denoted a premature perfection. What I like in your present Exhibition is, that you seem in a great measure to have left this academic manner, and to have adopted a more natural style.

French.—I do not exactly comprehend.

English.—Why, you know the English complain of French art as too laboured and mechanical, as not allowing scope enough for genius and originality, as you retort upon us for being coarse and rustic.

French.—Ah! I understand. *There* is a picture in the English style; the subject is a Greek massacre, by Rouget. It is an *ebauche* It is for effect. There is much spirit in the expression, and a boldness of execution, but every part is not finished. It is like a first sketch, or like the painting of the scenes at our theatres. He has another picture here.

English.—Yes, of great merit in the same style of dashing, off-hand, explosive effect. He is something between our Ward and Haydon. But that is not what I mean. I do not wish you to exchange your vices for ours. We are not as yet models in the FINE ARTS. I am only glad that you imitate us, as it is a sign you begin to feel a certain deficiency in yourselves. There is no necessity for grossness and extravagance, any more than for being finical or pedantic. Now there is a picture yonder, which I think has broken through the trammels of the modern

French school, without forfeiting its just pretensions to classical history. It has the name of Drölling on it. What, pray, is the subject of it?

French.—It is *Ulysses conducting Polyxena to the sacrifice.* He has one much better at the Luxembourg.

English.—I don't know; I have not seen that, but this picture appears to me to be a very favourable specimen of the present French school. It has great force, considerable beauty, symmetry of form, and expression; and it is animated flesh, not coloured stone. The action and gestures into which the figures throw themselves, seem the result of life and feeling, and not of putting casts after the antique into Opera attitudes.

French.—We do not think much of that picture. It has not been perfected.

English.—Perhaps it passes a certain conventional limit, and is borne away by the impulse of the subject; and of that the most eminent among the French artists might be thought to be as much afraid as the old lady at Court was that her face would fall in pieces, if her features relaxed into a smile. The Ulysses is poor and stiff: the nurse might be finer; but I like the faces of the two foremost figures much; they are handsome, interesting, and the whole female group is alive and in motion.

French.—What do you think of the picture by

Gerard, No. 745, of the *Meeting between Louis XIV. and the Spanish Ambassador?* It is greatly admired here.

English.—It appeared to me (as I passed it just now) to be a picture of great bustle and spirit; and it looks as if Iris had dipped her woof in it, the dresses are so gay and fine. Really, the show of variegated colours in the principal group is like a bed of tulips. That is certainly a capitally painted head of a priest stooping forward in a red cap and mantle.

French.—And the youth near him no less.

English.—The complexion has too much the texture of fruit.

French.—But for the composition—the contrast between youth and age is so justly marked. Are you not struck with the figure of the Spanish Ambassador? His black silk drapery is quite in the Italian style.

English.—I thought Gerard had been chiefly admired for a certain delicacy of expression, more than for his colouring or costume. He was a favourite painter of the Empress Josephine.

French.—But in the present subject there is not much scope for expression.

English.—It is very true; but in a picture of the same crowded and courtly character (*The last Moments of Henry IV.*,) the painter has contrived to introduce a great deal of beauty and tenderness of expression in the appearance of some of the youthful attendants. *This* is a more shewy and finely painted

drawing-room picture; but *that* appears to me to have more character in it. It has also the merit of being finished with great care. I think the French excel in small histories of the domestic or ornamental kind. Here, for instance, is a very pretty picture by Madame Hersent, 897, *Louis XIV. taking leave of his Grand-child.* It is well painted, the dresses are rich and correct—the Monarch has a great deal of negligent dignity mixed with the feebleness of age, the contrast of innocence and freshness in the child is well-managed, and the attendants are decayed beauties and very confidential-looking persons of that period. One great charm of all historical subjects is, to carry us back to the scene and time, which this picture does. Probably from the Age and Court of Louis XVIII. to that of Louis XIV. it is not far for a French imagination to transport itself.

French.—Monsieur, it is so far that we should never have got from the one to the other, if you had not helped us.

English.—So much the worse! But do you not think that a clever picture of the *Interior of a Gothic Ruin,* 247, (Bouton*.) It seems to me as if the artist had been reading Sir Walter Scott. That lofty, ruinous cave looks out on the wintry sea from one of the Shetland Isles. There is a cold, desolate look of horror pervading it to the utmost extremity. But the

* Inventor of the Diorama.

finishing is, perhaps, somewhat too exact for so wild a scene. Has not the snow, lodged on the broken ledges of the rocks, a little of the appearance of the coat of candied sugar on a twelfth-cake? But how comes the dog in possession of so smart a kennel? It is said in the Catalogue, that by his barking he alarms his master, who saves the poor woman and her infant from perishing. Who would have thought that such a scene as this had a master?

French.—Dogs are necessary everywhere in France: there is no place that we can keep them out of. They are like the machines in ancient poetry—a part of every plot. Poodles are the true *desirés*: they have ousted even the priests. They may soon set up a hierarchy of their own. They swarm, and are as filthy as an Egyptian religion.

English.—But this is a house-dog, not a lap-dog.

French.—There is no saying—but pass on. Is there any other picture that you like?

English.—Yes, I am much pleased with the one opposite, the *Marriage of the Virgin*, 268, by Mons. Caminade. It is both elegant and natural. The Virgin kneels in a simple and expressive attitude; in the children there is a playful and healthy aspect, and the grouping is quite like a classic bas-relief. Perhaps, in this respect, it wants depth. Can you tell me, why French painting so much affects the qualities of sculpture in general,—flatness and formality in the groups, and hardness of outline in the single figures?

French.—I cannot answer that question, as it is some time since I left England, where I remained only ten months to perfect myself in the language. You probably think more highly of the next picture: *The Establishment of the Enfans Trouvés,* by M.———?

English.—I am afraid not; for it has the old French flimsiness and flutter. The face of the Foundress resembles a shower of roseate tints. You may be sure, however, that the English in general will approve mightily of it, who like all subjects of charitable institutions. I heard an English lady just now in raptures with the naked children seated on the blankets, calling them affectionately, "poor little dears!" We like subjects of want, because they afford a relief to our own sense of comfortlessness, and subjects of benevolence, because they soothe our sense of self-importance—a feeling of which we stand greatly in need.

French.—What is your opinion of the portrait of Louis XVIII., by Gerard?

English.—It seems to have been painted after dinner, and as if his Majesty was uneasy in his seat—the boots might have been spared.

French.—We have a picture by one of your compatriots—the Chevalier Lawrence—

English.—Yes, the portrait of a Lady, in the next room. It was accounted one of the best portraits in our Somerset-house Exhibition last summer.

French.—But there is a portrait of a French Lady, placed as a companion to it, by Horace Vernet, which is thought better.

English.—I have no doubt. But I believe, in England, the preference would be given the contrary way.

French.—May I ask on what ground, Sir?

English.—Let me ask, did you ever happen to sit to have a cast of your head taken? Because I conceive that precisely the same heated, smooth, oily, close, stifling feeling that one's face has just before the mask is taken off, is that which is conveyed by the texture and look of a finished French portrait, generally speaking, and by this in particular. I like the Head of a Lady, by Guerin (838), on the opposite side of the room, better. It is clear, cold, blue and white, with an airy attitude, and firm drawing. There is no attempt to smother one with dingy flesh *rouged* over.

French.—But have you seen our miniatures? The English miniatures, I imagine, are not good.

English.—At least, we have a good many of them. I know an English critic, who would at least count you up thirty eminent English miniature-painters at a breath,—all first-rate geniuses; so differently do we view these things on different sides of the Channel! In truth, all miniatures must be much alike. There can be no such thing as an *English miniature*, that is, as a coarse, slovenly daub in little. We finish when

we cannot help it. We do not volunteer a host of graces, like you; but we can make a virtue of necessity. There was a Mr. Hayter, who painted resplendent miniatures, perfect mirrors of the highest heaven of beauty; but he preferred the English liberty of sign-post painting in oil. I observe among your miniatures several enamels and copies from the Old Masters in the Louvre. Has not the coming to them the effect of looking through a window? What a breadth, what a clearness, what a solidity? How do you account for this superiority? I do not say this invidiously, for I confess it is the same, whenever copies are introduced by stealth in our English Exhibition.

French.—I perceive, Sir, you have a prejudice in favour of the English style of art.

English.—None at all; but I cannot think our faults any justification of yours, or yours of ours. For instance, here is a landscape by a countryman of mine, Mr. Constable (No. 358). Why then all this affectation of dashing lights and broken tints and straggling lumps of paint, which I dare say give the horrors to a consummate French artist? On the other hand, why do not your artists try to give something of the same green, fresh, and healthy look of living nature, without smearing coats of varnish over raw *dabs* of colour (as we do), till the composition resembles the ice breaking up in marshy ground after a frosty morning? Depend upon it, in disputes about taste, as in other quarrels, there are faults on both sides.

French.—The English style has effect, but it is gross.

English.—True: yet in the inner rooms there are some water-colour landscapes, by Copley Fielding, which strike me as uniting effect with delicacy, particularly No. 360, with some beautiful trees fringing the fore-ground. I think our painters do best when they are cramped in the vehicle they employ. They are abusers of oil-colours.

French.—I recollect the name; but his works did not seem to me to be finished.

English.—They are finished as nature is finished: that is, the details are to be found in them, though they do not obtrude themselves. You French require every thing to be made out like pin's points or botanic specimens of leaves and trees. Your histories want life, and your landscapes air. I could have sworn the little fishing-piece (No. —) was English. It is such a daub, and yet has such a feeling of out-of-door scenery in it.

French.—You do not flatter us. But you allow our excellence in sculpture.

English.—There is an admirable study of a little girl going into a bath, by Jacquot. It is so simple, true, and expressive, I thought it might be Chantry's. I cannot say I saw any others that pleased me. The Eurydice, by Nantreuil, is a French Eurydice. It is an elegantly-formed female, affecting trifling airs and graces in the agonies of death. Suppose we re-

turn to the pictures in the Great Room. There is nothing very remarkable here, except the portrait of an artist by himself, which looks for all the world as if it fed upon its own white lead.

French.—Do you like that figure of a woman in one corner in the *Massacre of the Innocents?* The artist has done all he could to propitiate the English taste. He has left his work in a sufficiently barbarous and unfinished state.

English.—But he has taken pains to throw expression, originality, and breadth into it. With us it would be considered as a work of genius. I prefer it much to any thing by our artists of the same kind, both for the tone, the wild lofty character, and the unctuous freedom of the pencilling. There is a strange hurly-burly in the background, and a lurid tone over the whole picture. This is what we mean by imagination—giving the feeling that there is in nature. You mean by imagination the giving something *out of* it—such as the *Nymph* (No. —) *appearing to the River God.* The young lady is a very charming transparency, or gauze-drawing; and the River God is a sturdy wooden statue, painted over; but I would ask you, is there any thing in the picture that takes you beyond a milliner's shop in the Palais-royal, or a tea-garden in the neighbourhood of St. Cloud? The subject of *Locusta poisoning a young slave,* by Figalon, is, I think, forcibly and well treated. The old sorceress is not an every day

person. The French too seldom resort to the grace of Deformity. Yet how finely it tells! They are more timid and fastidious than the ancients, whom they profess to imitate. There is one other large historical composition in the room which I am partial to; and yet the faces, the manners, the colouring, every thing in it is French. It is the *Henry the Fourth pardoning the peasants who have supplied the besieged in Paris with food.* That head of a young woman near the middle is particularly fine, and in the happiest style of French art. Its effect against the sky is picturesque; it is handsome, graceful, sensitive, and tinged with an agreeable florid hue.

French.—But what is your opinion of Horace Vernet's Battle-piece?

English.—May I ask the subject?

French.—It is the battle of Mont-Mirail, after the return from Russia.

English.—Good: I was sadly afraid it was the Battle of Mont St. Jean. *We* ought to blot it forever from our history, if we have been, or intend to be, free. But I did not know but some Frenchman might be found to stain his canvass with it, and present it to M. le Vicomte Chateaubriand.

French.—But I speak of the painting, Sir.

English.—It is something in the same style, but hardly so clever as the picture of the Queen's Trial, by Hayter. Did you see that when you were in London?

French.—No, Sir.

English.—Then we cannot enter into the comparison.

French.—That is true.

English.—We never had a school of painting till the present day. Whether we have one at present, will be seen in the course of the winter. Yours flourished one hundred and fifty years ago. For, not to include Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorraine in it, (names that belong to time and nature,) there were Philip Champagne, Jouvenet, Le Sueur, whose works are surely unequalled by the present race of artists, in colouring, in conception of the subject, in the imitation of nature, and in picturesque effect. As a proof of it, they become their places, and look well in the Louvre. A picture of David's would be an eye-sore there. You are familiar with their works?

French.—I have seen those masters, but there is an objection to passing into that part of the Louvre.

English.—The air is, I own, different.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LUXEMBOURG GALLERY.

RACINE's poetry, and Shakspeare's, however wide apart, do not absolutely prove that the French and English are a distinct race of beings, who can never properly understand one another. But the Luxembourg Gallery, I think, settles this point forever—not in our favour, for we have nothing (thank God) to oppose to it, but decidedly against *them*, as a people incapable of any thing but the little, the affected, and extravagant in works of imagination and the FINE ARTS. Poetry is but the language of feeling, and we may convey the same meaning in a different form of words. But in the language of painting, words become *things;* and we cannot be mistaken in the character of a nation, that, in thus expressing themselves, uniformly leave out certain elements of feeling, and greedily and ostentatiously insert others that they should not. The English have properly no school of art, (though they have one painter at least equal to Molière,)—we have here either done nothing worth speaking of, compared with our progress in

other things, or our faults are those of negligence and rusticity. But the French have done their utmost to attain perfection, and they boast of having attained it. What they have done is, therefore, a fair specimen of what they can do. Their works contain undoubted proofs of labour, learning, power; yet they are only the worse for all these, since, without a thorough knowledge of the scientific and mechanical part of their profession, as well as profound study, they never could have immortalized their want of taste and genius in the manner they have done. Their pictures at the Luxembourg are "those faultless monsters which the *art* ne'er saw" till now—the "hand-writing on the wall," which nothing can reverse. It has been said, that "Vice to be hated needs but to be seen," and the same rule holds good in natural as in moral deformity. It is a pity that some kind hand does not take an opportunity of giving to ashes this monument of their glory and their shame, but that it is important to preserve the proofs of such an anomaly in the history of the human mind as a generation of artists painting in this manner, and looking down upon the rest of the world as not even able to appreciate their paramount superiority in refinement and elegance. It is true, strangers know not what to make of them. The ignorant look at them with wonder—the more judicious, with pain and astonishment at the perversion of talents and industry. Still, they themselves go on, quoting one another's works, and parcelling

out the excellences of the several pictures under different heads—*pour les coloris, pour le dessein, pour la composition, pour l'expression,* as if all the world were of accord on this subject, and Raphael had never been heard of. It is enough to stagger a nation, as well as an individual, in their admiration of their own accomplishments, when they find they have it all to themselves; but the French are blind, insensible, incorrigible to the least hint of any thing like imperfection or absurdity. It is this want of self-knowledge, and incapacity to conceive of any thing beyond a certain conventional circle, that is the original sin—the incurable error of all their works of imagination. If Nature were a French courtezan or Opera-dancer, their poetry and painting would be the finest in the world*.

The fault, then, that I should find with this Collection of Pictures is, that it is equally defective in the imitation of nature, which belongs to painting in general; or in giving the soul of nature—expression, which belongs more particularly to history-painting. Their style of art is false from beginning to end, nor is it redeemed even by the vices of genius, originality,

* It is the same idle, inveterate self-complacency, the same limited comprehension, that has been their ruin in every thing. Parisian *exquisites* could not conceive that it snowed in Russia, nor how it was possible for barbarians to *bivouac* in the Champs Elysées. But they have forgotten the circumstance altogether. Why should I remind them of it?

and splendour of appearance. It is at once tame and extravagant, laboured and without effect, repulsive to the senses and cold to the heart. Nor can it well be otherwise. It sets out on a wrong principle, and the farther it goes, nay, the more completely it succeeds in what it undertakes, the more inanimate, abortive, and unsatisfactory must be the performance. French painting, in a word, is not to be considered as an independent art, or original language, coming immediately from nature, and appealing to it—it is a bad *translation* of sculpture into a language essentially incompatible with it. The French artists take plaster-casts from the antique, and colour them by a receipt; they take plaster-casts and put them into action, and give expression to the features according to the traditional rules for composition and expression. This is the invariable process: we see the infallible results, which differ only according to the patience, the boldness, and ingenuity of the painter in departing from nature, and caricaturing his subject.

For instance, let us take the *Endymion* of Girodet, No. 57. It is a well-drawn, though somewhat effeminate Academy-figure. All the rest is what I have said. It is a waste of labour, an abuse of power. There is no repose in the attitude; but the body, instead of being dissolved in an immortal sleep, seems half lifted up, so as to produce a balance of form, and to make a display of the symmetry of the proportions. Vanity here presides even over sleep.

The head is turned on one side as if it had not belonged to the body (which it probably did not) and discovers a meagre, insignificant profile, hard and pinched up, without any of the genial glow of youth, or the calm, delighted expansion of the heavenly dream that hovered so long over it. The sharp edges of the features, like rims of tin, catch the moonlight, but do not reflect the benign aspect of the Goddess! There is no feeling (not a particle) of the poetry of the subject. Then the colouring is not natural, is not beautiful, is not delicate, but that of a livid body, glittering in the moon-beams, or with a cloud of steel-filings, glimmering round it for a veil of light. It is not left as *dead-colouring* in an evidently unfinished state, or so as to make a blank for the imagination to fill up (as we see in Fuseli's pictures); but every part is worked up with malicious industry, not to represent flesh, but to be as like marble or polished steel as possible. There is no variety of tint, no reflected light, no massing, but merely the difference that is produced in a smooth and uniformly coloured surface, by the alterations proper to sculpture, which are given with a painful and oppressive sense of effort and of difficulty overcome.

This is not a natural style. It is foppish and mechanical; or just what might be expected from taking a piece of stone and attempting to colour it, not from nature, not from imagination or feeling, but from a mere wilful determination to supply the impressions

of one sense from those of another, by dint of perseverance and a growing conceit of one's-self. There is, indeed, a progress to perfection; for by the time the work is finished, it is a finished piece of arrogance and folly. If you are copying a yellow colour, and you resolve to make it blue, the more blue you make it, the more perfectly you succeed in your purpose; but it is the less like yellow. So the more perfectly French a work of art is,* the less it is like nature! The French artists have imitated the presumption of the tyrant Mezentius, who wished to link dead bodies to living ones.—Again, in the same artist's picture of *Atala at the Tomb*, (which I think his best, and which would make a fine bas-relief*) the outline of the countenance of Atala is really noble, with a beautiful expression of calm resignation; and the only fault to be found with it is, that, supported as the head is in the arms of the Priest, it has too much the look of a bust after the antique, that we see carried about the streets by the Italian plaster-cast-makers. Otherwise, it is a classical and felicitous stroke of French genius. They do well to paint Sleep, Death, Night, or to approach as near as they can to the verge of *still-life*, and leaden-eyed obscurity! But what, I believe, is regarded as the master-piece of this artist, and what I have no objection to consider

* French pictures, to be thoroughly and unexceptionably good, ought to be *translated* back again into sculpture, from which they are originally taken.

as the triumph of French sublimity and pathos, is his picture of the *Deluge*, No. 55. The national talent has here broken loose from the trammels of refinement and pedantry, and soars unconstrained to its native regions of extravagance and bombast. The English are willing to abide by this as a test. If there be in the whole of this gigantic picture of a gigantic subject any thing but distortion, meanness, extreme absurdity and brute force, we are altogether mistaken in our notions of the matter. Was it not enough to place that huge, unsightly skeleton of old age upon the shoulders of the son, who is climbing a tottering, overhanging precipice, but the farce of imposture and improbability must be systematically kept up by having the wife clinging to him in all the agony of the most preposterous theatrical affectation, and then the two children dangling to her like the *fag-end* of horror, and completing the chain of disgusting, because impracticable and monstrous distress? *Quod sic mihi ostendis, incredulus odi.* The principle of gravitation must be at an end, to make this picture endurable for a moment. All the effect depends on the fear of falling, and yet the figures could not remain suspended where they are for a single instant (but must be flung "with hideous ruin and combustion down,") if they were any thing else but grisly phantoms. The terror is at once physical and preternatural. Instead of death-like stillness or desperate fortitude, preparing for inevitable fate, or hurrying from it with panic-fear

at some uncertain opening, they have set themselves in a picturesque situation, to meet it under every disadvantage, playing off their antics like a family of tumblers at a fair, and exhibiting the horrid grimaces, the vulgar rage, cowardice, and impatience of the most wretched actors on a stage. The painter has, no doubt, "accumulated horror on horror's head," in straining the credulity or harrowing up the feelings of the spectator to the utmost, and proving his want of conception no less by the exaggeration, than his want of invention by the monotony of his design. Real strength knows where to stop, because it is founded on truth and nature; but extravagance and affectation have no bounds. They rush into the vacuum of thought and feeling, and commit every sort of outrage and excess*. Neither in the landscape is there a

* Yet they tax Shakspeare with grossness and barbarity. There is nothing like this scene in all his plays, except Titus Andronicus, which is full of the same tragic exaggeration and tautology. I was walking out (this 1st of October—a clear grey autumnal morning) in the gardens of the Tuileries, and seeing the long, tall avenue of trees before me that leads up to the barrier of Neuilly, it put me in mind of former times, of prints and pictures of the scenery and roads in foreign countries which I had been used to from a child, with the old-fashioned look of every thing around Paris, as if it were the year 1724, instead of 1824, till the view before me seemed to become part of a dream, or to transport me into past time, or to raise itself up in my imagination, like a picture in the "Pilgrim's Progress." I wondered whether Buonaparte sometimes thought of this view when he was at St. Helena. I checked myself in this

more historic conception than in the actors on the scene. There is none of the keeping or unity that so remarkably characterizes Poussin's fine picture of the same subject, nor the sense of sullen, gradually coming fate. The waters do not rise slowly and heavily to the tops of the highest peaks, but dash tumultuously and violently down rocks and precipices. This is not the truth of the history, but it accords with the genius of the composition. I should think the painter might have received some hints from M. Chateaubriand for

strain of speculation as overcharged and disproportioned to the occasion, according to the correct and elegant taste of the people where I was, when on a post opposite, I saw stuck up in large letters, "*Pension de l'Univers*," meaning a tenpenny ordinary. These are the people that are continually crying out against the extravagance and bombast of their neighbours. Their imagination runs to the ends of the universe, when it has nothing but words to carry—no people so magnificent, so prodigal of professions, so hyperbolical as they—add but meaning or a weight of feeling to them, and they complain bitterly of the load, and throw it off as barbarous, intolerable, Gothic, and uncouth. It is not the extravagance of the style, then, with which they quarrel, but the palpableness of the imagery which gives a blow to their slender intellectual *stamina*, or the accumulation of feeling about it with which they have not firmness or comprehension to grapple. "Dip it in the ocean, and it will stand"—says Sterne's barber of the buckle of his wig. They magnify trifles, *con amore;* it is only when a poor struggling attempt is to be made to gain relief from the "perilous stuff that weighs upon the heart," or to embody the swelling conceptions of the soul in remote and lofty images, that they shrink back with the timidity of women and the formality of pedants.

the conduct of it. It is in his frothy, fantastic, rhodomontade way— "It out-herods Herod!"

David's pictures, after this, are tame and trite in the comparison; they are not romantic or *revolutionary*, but they are completely French; they are in a little, finical manner, without beauty, grandeur, or effect. He has precision of outline and accuracy of costume; but how small a part is this of high history! In a scene like that of the *Oath of the Horatii*, or the *Pass of Thermopylæ*, who would think of remarking the turn of an ancle, or the disposition of a piece of drapery, or the ornaments of a shield? Yet one is quite at leisure to do this in looking at the pictures, without having one's thoughts called off by other and nobler interests. The attempts at expression are meagre and constrained, and the attitudes affected and theatrical. There is, however, a unity of design and an interlacing of shields and limbs, which seems to express one soul in *the Horatii*, to which considerable praise would be due, if they had more the look of heroes, and less that of *petit-maitres*. I do not wonder David does not like Rubens, for he has none of the Fleming's bold, sweeping outline. He finishes the details very prettily and skilfully, but has no idea of giving magnitude or motion to the whole. His stern Romans and fierce Sabines look like young gentlemen brought up at a dancing or fencing school, and taking lessons in these several elegant exercises. What a fellow has he made of Romulus, standing in

the act to strike with all the air of a modern dandy! The women are in attitudes, and contribute to the eloquence of the scene. Here is a wife, (as we learn from the Catalogue) there a sister, here a mistress, there a grandmother with three infants. Thus are the episodes made out by a genealogical table of the relations of human life! Such is the nature of French genius and invention, that they can never get out of leading-strings! The figure of Brutus, in the picture of that subject, has a fine, manly, unaffected character. It has shrunk on one side to brood over its act, without any strut or philosophic ostentation, which was much to be dreaded. He is wrapt in gloomy thought, as in a mantle. Mr. Kean might have sat for this figure, for, in truth, it is every way like him. The group of women on the opposite side of the canvass, making a contrast by their lively colours and flimsy expression of grief, might have been spared. These pictures have, as we were told, been objected to for their too great display of the naked figure, in some instances bordering on indecency. The indecency (if so it is) is not in the nakedness of the figures, but in the barrenness of the artist's resources to clothe them with other attributes, and with genius as with a garment. If their souls had been laid bare as well as their limbs, their spirits would have shone through and concealed any outward deformity. Nobody complains of Michael Angelo's figures as wanting severity and decorum.

Guerin's *Phædra and Hippolitus* I have already

treated of, and I see no reason to alter my opinion. It was just painted when I last saw it, and has lost some of its freshness and the gloss of novelty. Modern pictures have the art of very soon becoming old. What remains of it has the merit of very clever studies after the antique, arranged into a subject. The rest is not worth speaking of. A set of school-boys might as well come with their portfolios and chalk-drawings under their arms, and set up for a school of Fine Art. A great nation ought to know better, and either strike out something original *for others to imitate*, or acknowledge that they have done nothing worthy of themselves. To arch an eye-brow, or to point a finger, is not to paint history. The study of nature can alone form the genuine artist. Any thing but this can only produce counterfeits. The tones and colours that feed the eye with beauty, the effects of light and shade, the soul speaking in the eyes or gasping on the lips, the groups that varying passion blends, these are the means by which nature reveals herself to the inspired gaze of genius, and that, treasured up and stamped by labour and study on the canvass, are the indispensable materials of historical composition. To take plaster-casts and add colour to them by an act of the will; or to take the same brittle, inanimate, inflexible models, and put life and motion into them by mechanical and learned rules, is more than Prometheus or Iris could pretend to do. It is too much for French genius to achieve. To put a statue into

motion, or to give appropriate, natural, and powerful expression to set features of any kind, is at all times difficult; but, in the present instance, the difficulty is enhanced, till it amounts to a sort of contradiction in terms; for it is proposed to engraft French character and expression (the only ones with which the artists are acquainted, or to which they can have access as living studies) on Greek forms and features. Two things more abhorrent in nature exist not. One of two consequences necessarily happens: either the original model is given literally and entire, without any attempt to disguise the awkward plagiarism, and inform it with a new character; or if the artist, disdaining such servile trammels, strives to infuse his own conceptions of grace and grandeur into it, then the hero or God of antiquity comes down from his pedestal to strut a French dancing-master or tragedian. For simplicity and unexampled grace, we have impertinence and affectation; for stoic gravity and majestic suffering, we have impatience, rage, womanish hysterics, and the utmost violence of frenzied distortion. French art (like all other national art) is either nothing, or a transcript of the national character. In the *Æneas and Dido*, of the same artist, the drawing, the costume, the ornaments, are correct and classical; the toilette of the picture is well made; the Æneas is not much more insipid than the hero of Virgil, and there is an exceedingly pretty girl, (like a common French peasant girl,) a supposed attendant on the

Queen. The only part of the picture in which he has attempted an extraordinary effect, and in which he has totally failed, is in the expression of enamoured attention on the part of the Queen. Her eyes do not, "like stars, shoot madly from their spheres," but they seem to have no sort of business in her head, and make the *doucereuse* in a most edifying manner. You are attracted to the face at a distance by the beauty of the outline (which is Greek) and instantly repelled by the grossness of the filling up of the expression (which is French). The Clytemnestra is, I think, his *chef-d'œuvre*. She is a noble figure, beautiful in person, and deadly of purpose; and there is that kind of breathless suppression of feeling, and noiseless moving on to her end, which the rigid style of French art is not ill-adapted to convey. But there is a strange tone of colouring thrown over the picture, which gives it the appearance of figures done in stained porcelain; or of an optical deception. There is nothing to remind you that the actors of the scene are of flesh and blood. They may be of steel or bronze, or glazed earthenware, or any other smooth, unfeeling substance. This hard, *liny*, metallic, tangible character is one of the great discriminating features of French painting, which arises partly from their habitual mode of study, partly from the want of an eye for nature, but chiefly, I think, from their craving after precise and definite ideas, in which, if there is the least flaw or inflection, their formal apprehension loses sight of

them altogether, and cannot recover the clue. This incrusted, impenetrable, stifling appearance is not only unpleasant to the eye, but repels sympathy, and renders their pictures (what they have been asserted to be) *negations* equally of the essential qualities both of painting and sculpture.

Of their want of *ideal* passion, or of the poetry of painting, and tendency to turn every thing either into comic or tragic pantomime, the picture of *Cain after the Murder of Abel*, by Paul Guerin, is a striking example. This composition does not want power. It would be disingenuous to say so. The artist has done what he meant in it. What, then, has he expressed? The rage of a wild beast, or of a maniac gnashing his teeth, and rushing headlong down a precipice to give vent to a momentary frenzy; not the fixed inward anguish of a man, withered by the curse of his Maker, and driven out into the wide universe with despair and solitude and unavailing remorse for his portion. The face of his wife, who appears crouched behind him, possesses great beauty and sweetness. But the sweetness and beauty are kept quite distinct. That is, grief absorbs some of the features, while others retain all their softness and serenity. This hypercriticism would not have been possible, if the painter had studied the expression of grief in nature. But he took a plaster-model, and tried to melt it into becoming woe!

I have said enough to explain my objections to the

grand style of French art; and I am sure I do not wish to pursue so unpleasant a subject any farther. I only wish to hint to my countrymen some excuse for not admiring these pictures, and to satisfy their neighbours that our want of enthusiasm is not wholly owing to barbarism and blindness to merit. It may be asked then, "Is there nothing to praise in this collection?" Far from it. There are many things excellent and admirable, with the drawbacks already stated, and some others that are free from them. There is Le Thiere's picture of the *Judgment of Brutus*; a manly, solid, and powerful composition, which was exhibited some years ago in London, and is, I think, decidedly superior to any of our West's. In Horace Vernet's *Massacre of the Mamelukes*, no English critic will deny the expression of gloomy ferocity in the countenance of the Sultan, or refuse to extol the painting of the drapery of the Negro, with his back to the spectator, which is, perhaps, equal to any thing of the Venetian School, and done (for a wager) from real drapery. Is not "the human face divine" as well worth studying in the original as the dyes and texture of a tunic? A small picture, by Delacroix, taken from the Inferno, *Virgil and Dante in the boat*, is truly picturesque in the composition and the effect, and shews a real eye for Rubens and for nature. The forms project, the colours are thrown into masses. Gerard's *Cupid and Psyche* is a beautiful little picture, and is indeed as beautiful, both in composition

and expression, as any thing of the kind can well be imagined; I mean, that it is done in its essential principles as a design *from* or *for* sculpture. The productions of the French school make better prints than pictures. Yet the best of them look like engravings from antique groups or cameos *. There is also a set of small pictures by Ducis, explaining the effects of Love on the study of Painting, Sculpture, and Poetry, taken from appropriate subjects, and elegantly executed. Here French art appears in its natural character again, courtly and polished, and is proportionably attractive. Perhaps it had better lay aside the club of Hercules, and take up the distaff of Omphale; and then the women might fairly beat the men out of the field, as they threaten almost to do at present. The French excel in pieces of light gallantry and domestic humour, as the English do in interiors and pig-styes. This appears to me the comparative merit and real bias of the two nations, in what relates to the productions of the pencil; but both will scorn the compliment, and one of them may write over the doors of their Academies of Art—"*Magnis excidit ausis.* The other cannot even say so much.

* The *Orpheus and Eurydice* of Drölling is a performance of great merit. The females, floating in the air before Orpheus, are pale as lilies, and beautiful in death. But he need hardly despair, or run wild as he does. He may easily overtake them; and as to vanishing, they have no appearance of it. Their figures are quite solid and determined in their outline.

CHAPTER VIII.

NATIONAL ANTIPATHIES.

THE prejudice we entertain against foreigners is not in the first instance owing to any ill-will we bear them, so much as to the untractableness of the imagination, which cannot admit two standards of moral value according to circumstances, but is puzzled by the diversity of manners and character it observes, and made uneasy in its estimate of the propriety and excellence of its own. It seems that others ought to conform to our way of thinking, or we to theirs; and as neither party is inclined to give up their peculiarities, we cut the knot by hating those who remind us of them. We get rid of any idle, half-formed, teazing, irksome sense of obligation to sympathise with or meet foreigners half way, by making the breach as wide as possible, and treating them as an inferior species of beings to ourselves. We become enemies, because we cannot be friends. Our self-love is annoyed by whatever creates a suspicion of our being in the wrong; and only recovers its level by setting down all those who differ from us as thoroughly odious and contemptible.

It is this consideration which makes the good qualities of other nations, in which they excel us, no set-off to their bad ones, in which they fall short of us; nay, we can forgive the last much sooner than the first. The French being a dirty people is a complaint we very often bring against them. This objection alone, however, would give us very little disturbance; we might make a wry face, an exclamation, and laugh it off. But when we find that they are lively, agreeable, and good-humoured in spite of their dirt, we then know not what to make of it. We are angry at seeing them enjoy themselves in circumstances in which we should feel so uncomfortable; we are baulked of the advantage we had promised ourselves over them, and make up for the disappointment by despising them heartily, as a people callous and insensible to every thing like common decency. In reading Captain Parry's account of the Esquimaux Indian woman, who so dexterously trimmed his lamp by licking up half the train-oil, and smearing her face and fingers all over with the grease, we barely smile at this trait of barbarism. It does not provoke a serious thought; for it does not stagger us in our opinion of ourselves. But should a fine Parisian lady do the same thing (or something like it) in the midst of an eloquent harangue on the infinite superiority of the French in delicacy and refinement, we should hardly restrain our astonishment at the mixture of incorrigible grossness and vanity. Unable to answer her argu-

ments, we should begin to hate her person: her gaiety and wit, which had probably delighted us before, would be changed into forwardness, flippancy, and impertinence; from seeing it united with so many accomplishments, we should be led to doubt whether *sluttishness* was not a virtue, and should remove the doubt out of court by indulging a feeling of private resentment, and resorting to some epithet of national abuse. The mind wishes to pass an act of uniformity for all its judgments: in defiance of every day's experience, it will have things of a piece, and where it cannot have every thing right or its own way, is determined to have it all wrong.

A Frenchman, we will say, drops what we think a frivolous remark, which excites in us some slight degree of impatience: presently after, he makes a shrewd, sensible observation. This rather aggravates the mischief, than mends it; for it throws us out in our calculations, and confounds the distinction between *sense* and *nonsense* in our minds. A volley of unmeaning declamation or frothy impertinence causes us less chagrin than a single word that overturns some assertion we had made, or puts us under the necessity of reversing, or imposes on us the still more unwelcome task of revising our conclusions. It is easy in this case to save ourselves the trouble by calling our antagonist *knave* or *fool;* and the temptation is too strong, when we have a whole host of national prejudices at our back to justify us in so concise and

satisfactory a mode of reasoning. A greater fund of vivacity and agreeable qualities in our neighbours is not sure to excite simple gratitude or admiration; it much oftener excites envy, and we are uneasy till we have quieted the sense of our deficiency by construing the liveliness of temper or invention, with which we cannot keep pace, into an excess of levity, and the continued flow of animal spirits into a species of intoxication or insanity. Because the French are animated and full of gesticulation, they are a *theatrical* people; if they smile and are polite, they are *like monkeys*—an idea an Englishman never has out of his head, and it is well if he can keep it between his lips*. No one assuredly would appear dull and awkward, who can help it. Many an English *belle*, who figures at home in the first circles of fashion and is admired for her airy, thoughtless volubility, is struck dumb, and looks a mere *dowdy* (as if it were a voluntary or assumed transformation of character) the moment she sets foot on French ground; and the whispered sounds, *lourde* or *elle n'est pas spirituelle*, lingering in her ears, will not induce her to dissuade her husband (if he is a Lord or Member of Parliament) from voting for a French war, and are answered by the thunders of our cannon on the French coast! We even quarrel with the beauty of French women, because it is not English. If their features are regular, we find

* See the admirably-drawn, but painful scene in Evelina between Captain Mervin and Monsieur Dubois.

fault with their complexions; and as to their expression, we grow tired of that eternal smile upon their faces; though their teeth are white, why should they be always shewing them? Their eyes have an unpleasant glitter about them; and their eyebrows, which are frequently black and arched, are painted and put on! In short, no individual, no nation is liked by another for the advantages it possesses over it in wit or wisdom, in happiness or virtue. We despise others for their inferiority, we hate them for their superiority; and I see no likelihood of an accommodation at this rate. The English go abroad; and when they come back, they brood over the civilities or the insults they have received with equal discontent. The gaiety of the Continent has thrown an additional damp upon their native air, and they wish to clear it by setting fire to a foreign town or blowing up a foreign citadel. We are then easy and comfortable for a while. We think we can do something, that is, violence and wrong; and should others talk of retaliating, we say with Lord Bathurst, "Let them come!"—our fingers tingling for the fray, and finding that nothing rouses us from our habitual stupor like hard blows, Defeated in the arts of peace, we get in good humour with ourselves by trying those of war. Ashamed to accost a lady, we dare face a bastion—without spirit to hold up our heads, we are too obstinate to turn our backs—and give ourselves credit for being the greatest nation in the world,

because our Jack Tars (who defend the wooden walls of Old England—the same that we afterwards see with sore arms and wooden legs, begging and bawling about our streets) are the greatest *blackguards* on the face of the globe; because our Life Guardsmen, who have no brains to lose, are willing to have them knocked out, and because with the incessant noise and stir of our steam-engines and spinning-jennies (for having no wish to enjoy, we are glad to work ourselves to death) we can afford to pay all costs!

What makes the matter worse, is the idle way in which we *abstract* upon one another's characters. We are struck only with the differences, and leave the common qualities out of the question. This renders a mutual understanding hopeless. We put the exceptions for the rule. If we meet with any thing odd and absurd in France, it is immediately set down as French and characteristic of the country, though we meet with a thousand odd and disagreeable things every day in England (that we never met before) without taking any notice of them. There is a wonderful *keeping* in our prejudices; we reason as consistently as absurdly upon the confined notions we have taken up. We put the good, wholesome, hearty, respectable qualities into one heap and call it English, and the bad, unwholesome, frivolous, and contemptible ones into another heap, and call it French; and whatever does not answer to this pretended sample, we reject as spurious and partial evidence. Our

24279

coxcomb conceit stands over the different races of mankind, like a smart serjeant of a regiment, and drills them into a pitiful uniformity, we ourselves being picked out as the *élite du corps*, and the rest of the world forming the forlorn hope of humanity. One would suppose, to judge from the conversation of the two nations, that all Frenchmen were alike, and that all Englishmen were personified by a particular individual, nicknamed John Bull. The French have no idea that there is any thing in England but roast-beef and plum-pudding, and a number of round, red faces, growing fat and stupid upon such kind of fare; while our traditional notion of the French is that of *soup-maigre* and wooden shoes, and a set of scare-crow figures corresponding to them. All classes of society and differences of character are by this unfair process consolidated into a sturdy, surly English yeoman on the one side of the Channel, or are boiled down and evaporate into a shivering, chattering valet-de-chambre, or miserable half-starved peasant on the other. It is a pleasant way of settling accounts and taking what we please for granted. It is a very old method of philosophizing, and one that is quite likely to last!

If we see a little old hump-backed withered Frenchman about five feet high, tottering on before us on a pair of spindle-shanks, with white thread stockings, a shabby great-coat, and his hair done up into a queue, his face dry, grey, and pinched up, his cheeks with-

out blood in them, his eyes without lustre, and his body twisted like a cork-screw, we point to this grotesque figure as a true Frenchman, as the very essence of a Parisian, and an edifying vestige of the ancient *régime* and of the last age, before the French character was sophisticated. It does not signify that just before we had passed a bluff, red-faced, jolly-looking coachman or countryman, six feet four inches high, having limbs in proportion, and able to eat up any two ordinary Englishmen. This thumping make-weight is thrown out of the scale, because it does not help out our argument, or confirm our prejudices. This huge, raw-boned, heavy, knock-kneed, well-fed, shining-faced churl makes no impression on our minds, because he is not French, according to our idea of the word; or we pass him over under the pretext that he *ought* to be an Englishman. But the other extreme we seize upon with avidity and delight; we dandle it, we doat upon it, we make a puppet of it to the imagination; we speak of it with glee, we quote it as a text, we try to make a caricature of it; our pens itch to describe it as a complete specimen of the French nation, and as a convincing and satisfactory proof, that the English are the only people who are of sound mind and body, strong wind and limb, and free from the infirmities of a puny constitution, affectation, and old age! An old woman in France, with wrinkles and a high-plaited cap, strikes us as being quite French, as if the old women in England did not wear

night-caps, and were not wrinkled. In passing along the streets, or through the walks near Paris, we continually meet a gentleman and lady whom we take for English, and they turn out to be French; or we fancy that they are French, and we find on a nearer approach, or from hearing them speak, that they are English. This does not at all satisfy us that there is no such marked difference between the two nations as we are led to expect; but we fasten on the first *lusus naturæ* we can find out as a striking representative of the universal French nation, and chuckle over and almost hug him to our bosoms as having kindly come to the relief of our wavering prejudices, and as an undoubted proof of our superiority to such a set of abortions as this, and of our right to insult and lord it over them at pleasure! If an object of this kind (as it sometimes happens) asks charity with an air of briskness and *politesse*, and does not seem quite so wretched as we would have him, this is a further confirmation of our theory of the national conceit and self-sufficiency; and his cheerfulness and content under deformity and poverty are added to his catalogue of crimes*! We have a very old and ridiculous fancy in

* A French dwarf, exhibited in London some years ago, and who had the misfortune to be born a mere trunk, grew enraged at the mention of another dwarf as a rival in bodily imperfection, and after insisting that the other had both hands and feet, exclaimed emphatically, "Mais moi, je suis unique." My old acquaintance (Dr. Stoddart) used formerly to recount

England, that all Frenchmen are or ought to be lean, and their women short and crooked; and when we see a great, fat, greasy Frenchman waddling along and ready to burst with good living, we get off by saying that it is an unwholesome kind of fat; or, if a Frenchwoman happens to be tall and straight, we immediately take a disgust at her masculine looks, and ask if all the women in France are giantesses?

It is strange we cannot let other people alone who concern themselves so little about us. Why measure them by our standard? Can we allow nothing to exist for which we cannot account, or to be right which has not our previous sanction? The difficulty seems to be to suspend our judgments, or to suppose a variety of causes to produce a variety of effects. All men must be alike—all Frenchmen must be alike,

this trait of French character very triumphantly, but then it was in war-time. He may think it indecent to have here hinted any such thing of an individual of a nation with whom we are at peace. At present, he seems to have become a sort of portent and by-word himself among English politicians; and without head or heart may exclaim—"*Mais moi, je suis unique!*"—See his late articles on the Spanish Refugees, &c. Would such a man have been any better, had he never turned renegade, or had he become (his first ambition) a revolutionary leader? Would he not have been as blood-thirsty, as bigoted, as perverse and ridiculous on the side of the question he left, as on the one he has come over to? It imports little what men are, so long as they are *themselves*. The great misfortune of a certain class of persons (both for their own sake and that of others) is ever to have been born or heard of!

This is a portable theory, and suits our indolence well. But, if they do not happen to come exactly into our terms, we are angry, and transform them into beasts. Our first error lies in expecting a number of different things to tally with an abstract idea, or general denomination, and we next stigmatize every deviation from this standard by a nickname. A Spaniard, who has more gravity than an Englishman, is an owl; a Frenchman, who has less, is a monkey. I confess, this last simile sticks a good deal in my throat; and at times it requires a stretch of philosophy to keep it from rising to my lips. A walk on the Boulevards is not calculated to rid an Englishman of all his prejudices or of all his spleen. The resemblance to an English *promenade* afterwards makes the difference more mortifying. There is room to breathe, a footpath on each side of the road, and trees over your head. But presently the appearance of a Bartlemy-fair all the year round, the number of little shabby stalls, the old iron, pastry, and children's toys; the little white lapdogs, with red eyes, combing and washing; the mud and the green trees, wafting alternate odours; the old women sitting like *terra-cotta* figures; the passengers running up against you, (most of them so taken up with themselves that they seem like a crowd of absent people!) the noise, the bustle, the flutter, the hurry without visible object; the vivacity without intelligible meaning; the loud and incessant cry of "*Messieurs*" from a bawling charlatan,

inviting you to some paltry, cheating game, and a broad stare or insignificant grin from the most ill-bred and ill-looking of the motley set at the appearance of an Englishman among them; all this jumble of little, teazing, fantastical, disagreeable, chaotic sensations really puts one's patience a little to the test; and throws one a little off one's guard. I was in this humour the other day, and wanted some object to conduct off a superfluity of rising irritability, when, at a painted booth opposite, I saw a great lubberly boy in an ecstacy of satisfaction. He had on a red coat, a huge wig of coarse yellow hair, and with his hat was beating a monkey in the face, dressed *en militaire*—grinning, jabbering, laughing, screaming, frantic with delight at the piteous aspect and peevish gestures of the animal; while a tall showman, in a rusty blue coat and long pig-tail, (which might have been stolen from the monkey) looked on with severe complacency and a lofty pride in the *bizarrerie*, and the "mutually reflected charities" of the scene. The trio (I am vexed to think it) massed themselves in my imagination, and I was not sorry to look upon them as a little national group, well-matched, and tricked out alike in pretensions to humanity*.

* I remember being once much amused with meeting, in a hot dusty day, between Blenheim and Oxford, some strolling Italians with a troop of dancing dogs, and a monkey in *costume* mounted on the back of one of them. He rode *en cavalier*, and kept his countenance with great gravity and decorum, and

I was relieved from this fit of misanthropy, by getting into the shade of the barrier-wall, and by meeting a man, (a common French mechanic,) carrying a child in his arms, and the mother by its side, clapping her hands at it, smiling, and calling out "Mon petit ami!" with unmingled and unwearied delight. There was the same over-animation in talking to the child as there would have been in talking to a dog or a parrot. But here it gave pleasure instead of pain, because our sympathies went along with it. I change my opinion of the French character fifty times a day, because, at every step, I wish to form a theory, which at the next step is contradicted. The ground seems to me so uncertain—the tenure by which I hold my opinions so frail, that at last I grow ashamed of them altogether—of what I think right, as of what I think wrong.

To praise or to blame is perhaps equally an impertinence. While we are strangers to foreign manners and customs, we cannot be judges; it would take almost a life to understand the reasons and the differences; and by the time we can be supposed to do this, we become used to them, and in some sense parties concerned. The English are the fools of an hypothesis, as the Scotch are of a system. We must

turned round with a certain look of surprise and resentment, that I, a foot-passenger, should seem to question his right to go on horseback. This seemed to me a fine piece of practical satire in the manner of Swift.

have an opinion—right or wrong; but, in that case, till we have the means of knowing whether it is right or wrong, it is as well to have a qualified one. We may at least keep our temper, and collect hints for self-correction; we may amuse ourselves in collecting materials for a decision that may never be passed, or will have little effect, even when it is, and may clear our eyesight from the motes and beams of prejudice by looking at things as they occur. Our opinions have no great influence on others; but the spirit in which we form them has a considerable one on our own happiness. It is of more importance to ourselves than to the French, what we think of them. It would be hard if a mental obliquity on their parts should "thrust us from a level consideration," or some hasty offence taken at the outset should shut up our eyes, our ears, and understandings for the rest of a journey, that we have commenced for no other purpose than to be spectators of a new and shifting scene, and to have our faculties alike open to impressions of all sorts.

What Englishman has not seen the *Cemetery of Pére la Chaise?* What Englishman will undertake either to condemn or entirely approve it, unless he could enter completely into the minds of the French themselves? The approach to it (a little way out of Paris) is literally "garlanded with flowers." You imagine yourself in the neighbourhood of a wedding, a fair, or some holiday-festival. Women are sitting

by the road-side or at their own doors, making chaplets of a sort of yellow flowers, which are gathered in the fields, baked, and will then last a French "Forever." They have taken "the lean abhorred monster," Death, and strewed him o'er and o'er with sweets; they have made the grave a garden, a flower-bed, where all Paris reposes, the rich and the poor, the mean and the mighty, gay and laughing, and putting on a fair outside as in their lifetime. Death here seems life's play-fellow, and grief and smiling content sit at one tomb together. Roses grow out of the clayey ground; there is the urn for tears, the slender cross for faith to twine round; the neat marble monument, the painted wreaths thrown upon it to freshen memory, and mark the hand of friendship. "No black and melancholic yew-trees" darken the scene, and add a studied gloom to it—no ugly death's heads or carved skeletons shock the sight. On the contrary, some pretty Ophelia, as general mourner, appears to have been playing her fancies over a nation's bier, to have been scattering "pansies for thoughts, rue for remembrances." But is not the expression of grief, like hers, a little too fantastical and light-headed? Is it not too much like a childish game of *Make-Believe?* Or does it not imply a certain want of strength of mind, as well as depth of feeling, thus to tamper with the extremity of woe, and varnish over the most serious contemplation of mortality? True sorrow is manly and decent, not

effeminate or theatrical. The tomb is not a baby-house for the imagination to hang its idle ornaments and mimic finery in. To meet sad thoughts, and overpower or allay them by other lofty and tender ones, is right; but to shun them altogether, to affect mirth in the midst of sighing, and divert the pangs of inward misfortune by something to catch the eye and tickle the sense, is what the English do not sympathize with. It is an advantage the French have over us. The fresh plants and trees that wave over our graves; the cold marble that contains our ashes; the secluded scene that collects the wandering thoughts; the innocent, natural flowers that spring up, unconscious of our loss—objects like these at once cherish and soften our regrets; but the petty daily offerings of condolence, the forced liveliness and the painted pride of the scene before us, are like galvanic attempts to recall the fleeting life—they neither flatter the dead nor become the living! One of the most heartless and flimsy extravagances of the *New Eloise,* is the attempt made to dress up the daughter of Madame d'Orbe like Julia, and set her in her place at the table after her death. Is not the burying-ground of the *Père la Chaise* tricked out and over-acted much on the same false principle, as if there were nothing sacred from impertinence and affectation? I will not pretend to determine; but to an English taste it is so. We see things too much, perhaps, on the dark side; they see them too much (if

that is possible) on the bright. Here is the tomb of Abelard and Eloise—immortal monument, immortal as the human heart and poet's verse can make it! But it is slight, fantastic, of the olden time, and seems to shrink from the glare of daylight, or as if it would like to totter back to the old walls of the Paraclete, and bury its quaint devices and its hallowed inscriptions in shadowy twilight. It is, however, an affecting sight, and many a votive garland is sprinkled over it. Here is the tomb of Ney, (the double traitor) worthy of his fate and of his executioner;—and of Massena and Kellerman. There are many others of great note, and some of the greatest names—Moliere, Fontaine, De Lille. Chancellors and *charbottiers* lie mixed together, and announce themselves with equal pomp. These people have as good an opinion of themselves after death as before it. You see a bust with a wreath or crown round its head—a strange piece of masquerade—and other tombs with a print or miniature of the deceased hanging to them! Frequently a plain marble slab is laid down for the surviving relatives of the deceased, waiting its prey in expressive silence. This is making too free with death, and acknowledging a claim which requires no kind of light to be thrown upon it. We should visit the tombs of our friends with more soothing feelings, without marking out our own places beside them. But every French thought or sentiment must have an external emblem. The inscriptions are in general, however,

simple and appropriate. I only remarked one to which any exception could be taken; it was a plain tribute of affection to some individual by his family, who professed to have "erected this *modest* monument to preserve his memory *forever!*" What a singular idea of modesty and eternity! So the French, in the Catalogue of the Louvre, in 1803, after recounting the various transmigrations of the Apollo Belvidere in the last two thousand years (vain warnings of mutability!) observed, that it was at last placed in the Museum at Paris, "to remain there forever." Alas! it has been gone these ten years.

CHAPTER IX.

MADEMOISELLE MARS (of whom so much has been said) quite comes up to my idea of an accomplished comic actress. I do not know that she does more than this, or imparts a feeling of excellence that we never had before, and are at a loss how to account for afterwards (as was the case with our Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. Siddons in opposite departments,) but she answers exactly to a preconception in the mind, and leaves nothing wanting to our wishes. I had seen nothing of the kind on our stage for many years, and my satisfaction was the greater, as I had often longed to see it. The last English actress who shone in genteel comedy was Miss Farren, and she was just leaving the stage when I first became acquainted with it. She was said to be a faint copy of Mrs. Abington—but I seem to see her yet, glittering in the verge of the horizon, fluttering, gay, and airy, the "elegant turn of her head," the nodding plume of feathers, the gloves and fan, the careless mien, the provoking indifference—we have had nothing like it since, for I cannot admit that Miss O'Neil had the *Lady-Teazle* air at all. Out of tragedy she was awkward and heavy. She could draw out a white, patient, pathetic

pocket-handkerchief with great grace and simplicity; she had no notion of flirting a fan. The rule here is to do every thing without effort—

"Flavia the least and slightest toy
Can with resistless art employ."

This art is lost among us; the French still have it in very considerable perfection: Really, it is a fine thing to see Molière's *Misanthrope*, at the Theatre Français, with Mademoiselle Mars as *Celimène*. I had already seen some very tolerable acting at the minor French Theatres, but I remained sceptical; I still had my English scruples hanging about me, nor could I get quite reconciled to the French manner. For *mannerism* is not excellence. It might be good, but I was not sure of it. Whatever one hesitates about in this way, is not the best. If a thing is first-rate, you see it at once, or the fault is yours. True genius will always get the better of our local prejudices, for it has already surmounted its own. For this reason, one becomes an immediate convert to the excellence of the French school of serious comedy. Their actors have lost little or nothing of their spirit, *tact*, or skill in embodying the wit and sense of their favourite authors. The most successful passages do not interfere with our admiration of the best samples of English acting, or run counter to our notions of propriety. That which we thought well done among ourselves, we here see as well or better done; that which we thought defective,

avoided. The excellence or even superiority of the French over us only confirms the justness of our taste. If the actor might feel some jealousy, the critic can feel none. What Englishman does not read Molière with pleasure? Is it not a treat then to see him well acted? There is nothing to recall our national antipathies, and we are glad to part with such unpleasant guests.

The curtain is scarcely drawn up, when something of this effect is produced in the play I have mentioned, and the entrance of Mademoiselle Mars decides it. Her few first simple sentences—her "*Mon Ami*" at her lover's first ridiculous suggestion, the mingled surprise, displeasure, and tenderness in the tone—her little peering eyes, full of languor and archness of meaning—the peaked nose and thin compressed lips, opening into an intelligent, cordial smile—her self-possession—her slightest gesture—the ease and rapidity of her utterance, every word of which is perfectly distinct—the playful, wondering good-nature with which she humours the Misanthrope's eccentricities throughout, and the finer tone of sense and feeling in which she rejects his final proposal, must stamp her a favourite with the English as well as with the French part of the audience. I cannot see why that should not be the case. She is all life and spirit. Would we be thought entirely without them? She has a thorough understanding and relish of her author's text. So, we think, have we. She has cha-

racter, expression, decision—they are the very things we pique ourselves upon. Ease, grace, propriety—we aspire to them, if we have them not. She is free from the *simagrées*, the unmeaning petulance and petty affectation that we reproach the French with, and has none of the awkwardness, insipidity, or vulgarity that we are so ready to quarrel with at home. It would be strange if the English did not admire her as much as they profess to do. I have seen but one book of travels in which she was abused, and that was written by a Scotchman! Mademoiselle Mars is neither handsome nor delicately formed. She has not the light airy grace, nor the evanescent fragility of appearance that distinguished Miss Farren, but more point and meaning, or more of the intellectual part of comedy.

She was admirably supported in *Celimène*. Monsieur Damas played the hero of the *Misanthrope*, and played it with a force and natural freedom which I had no conception of as belonging to the French stage. If they drawl out their tragic rhymes into an endless sing-song, they cut up their comic verses into *mince-meat*. The pauses, the emphasis, are left quite *ad libitum*, and are as sudden and varied as in the most familiar or passionate conversation. In Racine they are obliged to make an effort to get out of themselves, and are solemn and well-behaved; in Molière they are at home, and commit all sorts of extravagances with wonderful alacrity and effect. Heroes in co-

medy, pedants in tragedy, they are greatest on small occasions; and their most brilliant efforts arise out of the ground of common life. Monsieur Damas's personification of the Misanthrope appeared to me masterly. He had apparently been chosen to fill the part for his ugliness; but he played the lover and the fanatic with remarkable skill, nature, good-breeding, and disordered passion. The rapidity, the vehemence of his utterance and gestures, the transitions from one feeling to another, the fond rapture, the despair, the rage, the sarcastic coolness, the dignified contempt, were much in the style of our most violent tragic representations, and such as we do not see in our serious comedy or in French tragedy. The way in which this philosophic madman gave a loose to the expression of his feelings, when he first suspects the fidelity of his mistress, when he quarrels with her, and when he is reconciled to her, was strikingly affecting. It was a regular furious scolding-bout, with the ordinary accompaniments of tears, screams, and hysterics. A comic actor with us would have made the part insipid and genteel; a tragic one with them pompous and affected. At Drury-lane, Mr. Powell would take the part. Our fine gentlemen are walking suits of clothes; their tragic performers are a professor's gown and wig: the Misanthrope of Molière, as Monsieur Damas plays it, is a true orator and man of genius. If they pour the oil of decorum over the loftier waves of tragedy, their sentimental comedy is

like a puddle in a storm. The whole was admirably cast, and ought to make the English ashamed of themselves, if they are not above attending to any thing that can give pleasure to themselves or other people. Arsinoe, the friend and rival of Celimène, was played by Madame ———, a ripe, full-blown beauty, a prude, the redundancies of whose person and passions are kept in due bounds by tight lacing and lessons of morality. Eliante was a Mademoiselle Menjaud, a very amiable-looking young person, and exactly fitted to be an *elève* in this *School for Scandal*. She smiled and blushed and lisped mischief in the prettiest manner imaginable. The man who comes to read his Sonnet to Alceste was inimitable. His teeth had an enamel, his lips a vermilion, his eyes a brilliancy, his smile a self-complacency, such as never met in poet or in peer, since Revolutions and Reviews came into fashion. He seemed to have been preserved in a glass-case for the last hundred and fifty years, and to have walked out of it in these degenerate days, dressed in brocade, in smiles and self-conceit, to give the world assurance of what a Frenchman was! Philinte was also one of those prosing confidants, with grim features, and profound gravity, that are to be found in all French plays, and who, by their patient attention to a speech of half an hour long, acquire an undoubted right to make one of equal length in return. When they were all drawn up in battle-array, in the scene near the beginning, which

Sheridan has copied, it presented a very formidable aspect indeed, and the effect was an historical deception. You forgot you were sitting at a play at all, and fancied yourself transported to the court or age of Louis XIV.!—Blest period!—the triumph of folly and of France, when, instead of poring over systems of philosophy, the world lived in a round of impertinence—when to talk nonsense was wit, to listen to it politeness—when men thought of nothing but themselves, and turned their heads with dress instead of the affairs of Europe—when the smile of greatness was felicity, the smile of beauty Elysium—and when men drank the brimming nectar of self-applause, instead of waiting for the opinion of the *reading public!* Who would not fling himself back to this period of idle enchantment? But as we cannot, the best substitute for it is to see a comedy of Molière's acted at the Theatre Français. The thing is there imitated to the life.

After all, there is something sufficiently absurd and improbable in this play. The character from which it takes its title is not well made out. A misanthrope and a philanthropist are the same thing, as Rousseau has so well shewn in his admirable criticism on this piece. Besides, what can be so nationally characteristic as the voluntary or dramatic transfers of passion in it? Alceste suspects his mistress's truth, and makes an abrupt and violent declaration of love to another woman in consequence, as if the passion

(in French) went along with the speech, and our feelings could take any direction at pleasure which we bethought ourselves of giving them. And then again, when after a number of outrages and blunders committed by himself, he finds he is in the wrong, and that he ought to be satisfied with *Celimène* and the world, which turns out no worse than he always thought it; he takes, in pure spite and the spirit of contradiction, the resolution to quit her forever, unless she will agree to go and live with him in a wilderness. This is not misanthropy, but sheer "midsummer madness." It is a mere idle abstract determination to be miserable, and to make others so, and not the desperate resource of bitter disappointment (for he has received none) nor is it in the least warranted by the proud indignation of a worthy sensible man at the follies of the world (which character Alceste is at first represented to be.) It is a gratuitous start of French imagination, which is still in extremes, and ever in the wrong. Why, I would ask, must a man be either a mere courtier and man of the world, pliant to every custom, or a mere enthusiast and maniac, absolved from common sense and reason? Why could not the hero of the piece be a philosopher, a satirist, a railer at mankind in general, and yet marry *Celimène*, with whom he is in love, and who has proved herself worthy of his regard? The extravagance of *Timon* is tame and reasonable to this; for *Timon* had been ruined by his faith in mankind, whom

he shuns. Yet the French would consider *Timon* as a very *farouche* and *outré* sort of personage. To be hurried into extremities by extreme suffering and wrong, is with them absurd and shocking: to play the fool without a motive or in virtue of making a set speech, they think in character and keeping. So far, to be sure, we differ in the first principles of dramatic composition. A similar remark might be made on the Tartuffe. This character is detected over and over again in acts of the most barefaced profligacy and imposture; he makes a fine speech on the occasion, and *Orgon* very quietly puts the offence in his pocket. This credulity to verbal professions would be tolerated on no stage but the French, as natural or probable. Plain English practical good sense would revolt at it as a monstrous fiction. But the French are so fond of hearing themselves talk, that they take a sort of interest (by proxy) in whatever affords an opportunity for an ingenious and prolix harangue, and attend to the dialogue of their plays, as they might to the long-winded intricacies of a law-suit. Mr. Bartolino Saddletree would have *assisted* admirably at a genuine prosing French Comedy.

Mademoiselle Mars played also in the afterpiece, a sort of shadowy *Catherine and Petruchio*. She is less at home in the romp than in the fine lady. She did not give herself up to the "whole loosened soul" of farce, nor was there the rich laugh, the sullen caprice,

the childish delight and astonishment in the part, that Mrs. Jordan would have thrown into it. Mrs. Orger would have done it almost as well. There was a dryness and restraint, as if there was a constant dread of running into caricature. The outline was correct, but the filling up was not bold or luxuriant. There is a tendency in the lighter French comedy to a certain *jejuneness* of manner, such as we see in lithographic prints. They do not give full swing to the march of the humour, just as in their short, tripping walk they seem to have their legs tied. Madame Marsan is in this respect superior. There was an old man and woman in the same piece, in whom the quaint drollery of a couple of veteran retainers in the service of a French family was capitally expressed. The humour of Shakspeare's play, as far as it was extracted, hit very well.—The behaviour of the audience was throughout exemplary. There was no crowd at the door, though the house was as full as it could hold; and indeed most of the places are bespoke, whenever any of their standard pieces are performed. The attention never flags; and the buzz of eager expectation and call for silence, when the curtain draws up, is just the same as with us when an Opera is about to be performed, or a song to be sung. A French audience are like flies caught in treacle. Their wings are clogged, and it is all over with their friskings and vagaries. Their bodies and their minds *set* at once. They have, in fact, a national theatre and a national

literature, which we have not. Even well-informed people among us hardly know the difference between Otway and Shakspeare; and if a person has a fancy for any of our elder classics, he may have it to himself for what the public cares. The French, on the contrary, know and value their best authors. They have Molière and Racine by heart—they come to their plays as to an intellectual treat; and their beauties are reflected in a thousand minds around you, as you see your face at every turn in the *Café des Milles-Colonnes*. A great author or actor is really in France what one fancies them in England, before one knows any thing of the world as it is called. It is a pity we should set ourselves up as the only reading or reflecting people—*ut lucus a non lucendo* *. But we have here no oranges in the pit, no cry of porter and cider, no jack-tars to *encore* Mr. Braham three times in "The Death of Abercrombie," and no play-bills. This last is a great inconvenience to strangers, and is

Mr. Wordsworth, in some fine lines, reproaches the French with having "no single volume paramount, no master-spirit"—

"But equally a want of books and men."

I wish he would shew any single author that exercises such a "paramount" influence over the minds of the English, as four or five "master-spirits" do on those of the French. The merit is not here the question, but the effect produced. He himself is not a very striking example of the sanguine enthusiasm with which his countrymen identify themselves with works of great and original genius!

what one would not expect from a play-going people; though it probably arises from that very circumstance, as they are too well acquainted with the actors and pieces to need a prompter. They are not accidental spectators, but constant visitors, and may be considered as behind the scenes.

I saw three very clever comic actors at the Theatre des Varietés on the Boulevards, all quite different from each other, but quite French. One was *Le Peintre*, who acted a master-printer; and he *was* a master-printer, so bare, so dingy, and so wan, that he might be supposed to have lived on printer's ink and on a crust of dry bread cut with an *oniony* knife. The resemblance to familiar life was so complete and so habitual, as to take away the sense of imitation or the pleasure of the deception. Another was Odry, (I believe,) who with his blue coat, gold-laced hat, and corpulent belly, resembled a jolly, swaggering, good-humoured parish-officer, or the boatswain of an English man-of-war. His *éclats de rire*, the giddy way in which he ran about the stage (like an overgrown school-boy), his extravagant noises, and his gabbling and face-making were, however, quite in the French style. A fat, pursy Englishman, acting the *droll* in this manner, would be thought drunk or mad; the Frenchman was only gay! Monsieur Potier played an old lover, and, till he was *drest*, looked like an old French cook-shop keeper. The old beau transpired through his finery afterwards. But, though the part

was admirably understood, the ridicule was carried too far. This person was too meagre, his whisper too inaudible, his attempts at gallantry too feeble and vapid, and the whole too much an exhibition of mere physical decay to make the satire pleasant. There should be at least some revival of the dead; the taper of love ought to throw out an expiring gleam. In the song in praise of Love he threw a certain romantic air into the words, warbling them in a faint *demi-voix*, and with the last sigh of a youthful enthusiasm fluttering on his lips. This was charming. I could not help taking notice, that during his breakfast, and while he is sipping his coffee, he never once ceases talking to his valet the whole time. The concluding scene, in which, after kneeling to his mistress, he is unable to rise again without the help of his nephew, who surprises him in this situation, and who is also his rival, is very amusing*. The songs at this theatre are very pleasing and light, but so short, that they are over almost as soon as begun, and before your ears have a *mouthful* of sound. This is very tantalizing to us; but the French seem impatient to have the dialogue go on again, in which they may suppose

The same circumstance literally happened to Gibbon, though from a different cause. He fell on his knees before a Swiss lady (I think a Mademoiselle d'Ivernois,) and was so fat he could not rise. She left him in this posture, and sent in a servant to help him up.

themselves to have a share. I wanted to see Brunet, but did not.

Talma and Mademoiselle Georges (the great props of French tragedy) are not at present here. Talma is at Lyons, and Mademoiselle Georges has retired *on a pique* into the country, in the manner of some English actresses. I had seen them both formerly, and should have liked to see them again. Talma has little of the formal *automaton* style in his acting. He has indeed that common fault in his countrymen of speaking as if he had swallowed a handful of snuff; but in spite of this, there is great emphasis and energy in his enunciation, a just conception, and an impressive representation of character. He comes more in contact with nature than our Kemble-school, with more of dignity than the antagonist one. There is a dumb eloquence in his gestures. In *Œdipus*, I remember his raising his hands above his head, as if some appalling weight were falling on him to crush him; and in the *Philoctetes*, the expression of excruciating pain was of that mixed mental and physical kind, which is so irresistibly affecting in reading the original Greek play, which Racine has paraphrased very finely. The sounds of his despair and the complaints of his desolate situation were so thrilling, that you might almost fancy you heard the wild waves moan an answer to them. Mademoiselle Georges (who gave recitations in London in 1817) was, at the time I saw her, a very remarkable per-

son. She was exceedingly beautiful, and exceedingly fat. Her fine handsome features had the regularity of an antique statue, with the roundness and softness of infancy. Her well-proportioned arms (swelled out into the largest dimensions) tapered down to a delicate baby-hand. With such a disadvantage there was no want of grace or flexibility in her movements. Her voice had also great sweetness and compass. It either sunk into the softest accents of tremulous plaintiveness, or rose in thunder. The effect was surprising; and one was not altogether reconciled to it at first. She plays at the Odeon, and has a rival at the Theatre Français, Madame Paradol, who is very like her in person. She is an immense woman; when I saw her, I thought it was Mademoiselle Georges fallen away! There are some other tragic actresses here, with the prim airs of a French milliner forty years ago, the *hardiesse* of a battered *gouvernante*, and the brazen lungs of a drum-major. Mademoiselle Duchesnois I have not had an opportunity of seeing.

CHAPTER X.

PARIS is a beast of a city to be in—to those who cannot get out of it. Rousseau said well, that all the time he was in it, he was only trying how he should leave it. It would still bear Rabelais' double etymology of *Par-ris* and *Lutetia**. There is not a place in it where you can set your foot in peace or comfort, unless you can take refuge in one of their hotels, where you are locked up as in an old-fashioned citadel, without any of the dignity of romance. Stir out of it, and you are in danger of being run over every instant. Either you must be looking behind you the whole time, so as to be in perpetual fear of their hackney-coaches and cabriolets; or, if you summon resolution, and put off the evil to the last moment, they come up against you with a sudden acceleration of pace and a thundering noise, that dislocates your nervous system, till you are brought to yourself by having the same startling process repeated. Fancy yourself in London with the footpath taken away, so

* The fronts of the houses and of many of the finest buildings seem (so to speak) to have been composed in mud, and translated into stone—so little projection, relief, or airiness have they. They have a look of being *stuck* together.

that you are forced to walk along the middle of the streets with a dirty gutter running through them, fighting your way through coaches, waggons, and hand-carts trundled along by large mastiff-dogs, with the houses twice as high, greasy holes for shop-windows, and piles of wood, green-stalls, and wheelbarrows placed at the doors, and the contents of wash-hand basins pouring out of a dozen stories—fancy all this and worse, and, with a change of scene, you are in Paris. The continual panic in which the passenger is kept, the alarm and the escape from it, the anger and the laughter at it, must have an effect on the Parisian character, and tend to make it the whiffling, skittish, snappish, volatile, inconsequential, unmeaning thing it is. The coachmen nearly drive over you in the streets, because they would not mind being driven over themselves—that is, they would have no fear of it the moment before, and would forget it the moment after. If an Englishman turns round, is angry, and complains, he is laughed at as a blockhead; and you must submit to be rode over in your national character. A horseman makes his horse curvet and capriole right before you, because he has no notion how an English lady, who is passing, can be nervous. They run up against you in the street out of mere heedlessness and hurry, and when you expect to have a quarrel (as would be the case in England) make you a low bow and slip on one side, to shew their politeness. The very walk of the Parisians, that light, jerking,

fidgetting trip on which they pride themselves, and think it grace and spirit, is the effect of the awkward construction of their streets, or of the round, flat, slippery stones, over which you are obliged to make your way on tiptoe, as over a succession of stepping-stones, and where natural ease and steadiness are out of the question. On the same principle, French women shew their legs (it is a pity, for they are often handsome, and a stolen glimpse of them would sometimes be charming) sooner than get draggle-tailed; and you see an old French beau generally walk like a crab nearly sideways, from having been so often stuck up in a lateral position between a coach-wheel, that threatened the wholeness of his bones, and a stone-wall, that might endanger the cleanliness of his person. In winter, you are splashed all over with the mud; in summer, you are knocked down with the smells. If you pass along the middle of the street, you are hurried out of breath; if on one side, you must pick your way no less cautiously. Paris is a vast pile of tall and dirty alleys, of slaughter-houses and barbers' shops—an immense suburb huddled together within the walls so close, that you cannot see the loftiness of the buildings for the narrowness of the streets, and where all that is fit to live in, and best worth looking at, is turned out upon the quays, the boulevards, and their immediate vicinity.

Paris, where you can get a sight of it, is really fine. The view from the bridges is even more imposing and

picturesque than ours, though the bridges themselves and the river are not to compare with the Thames, or with the bridges that cross it. The mass of public buildings and houses, as seen from the Pont Neuf, rises around you on either hand, whether you look up or down the river, in huge, aspiring, tortuous ridges, and produces a solidity of impression and a fantastic confusion not easy to reconcile. The clearness of the air, the glittering sunshine, and the cool shadows add to the enchantment of the scene. In a bright day, it dazzles the eye like a steel mirror. The view of London is more open and extensive; it lies lower, and stretches out in a lengthened line of dusky magnificence. After all, it is an ordinary town, a place of trade and business. Paris is a splendid vision, a fabric dug out of the earth, and hanging over it. The stately, old-fashioned shapes and jutting angles of the houses give it the venerable appearance of antiquity, while their texture and colour clothe it in a robe of modern splendour. It looks like a collection of palaces, or of ruins! They have, however, no single building that towers above and crowns the whole, like St. Paul's, (the Pantheon is a stiff, *unjointed* mass to it)—nor is *Notre-Dame* at all to be compared to Westminster-Abbey with its Poets' Corner, that urn full of noble English ashes, where Lord Byron was ashamed to lie. The Chamber of Deputies (formerly the residence of the Dukes of Bourbon) presents a brilliant frontispiece, but it is a kind of architectural abstraction, stand-

ing apart, and unconnected with every thing else, not burrowing, like our House of Commons (that true and original model of a Representative Assembly House!) almost under-ground, and lost among the *rabble* of streets. The Tuileries is also a very noble pile of buildings, if not a superb piece of architecture. It is a little heavy and monotonous, a habitation for the bodies or for the minds of Kings, but it goes on in a laudable jog-trot, right-lined repetition of itself, without much worth or sense in any single part (like the accumulation of greatness in an hereditary dynasty). At least it ought to be finished (for the omen's sake), to make the concatenation of ideas inviolable and complete! The Luxembourg, the Hospital of Invalids, the Hall of Justice, and innumerable other buildings, whether public or private, are far superior to any of the kind we have in London, except Whitehall, on which Inigo Jones laid his graceful hands; or Newgate, where we English shine equally in architecture, morals, and legislation. Our palaces (within the bills of mortality) are dog-holes, or receptacles for superannuated Abigails, and tabbies of either species. Windsor (whose airy heights are placed beyond them) is, indeed, a palace for a king to inhabit, or a poet to describe, or to turn the head of a prose-writer. (See Gray's Ode, and the famous passage in Burke about it.) Buonaparte's Pillar, in the Place Vendôme, cast in bronze, and with excellent sculptures, made of the cannon taken from the Allies

in their long march to Paris, is a fine copy of the antique. A white flag flaps over it. I should like to write these lines at the bottom of it. Probably, Mr. Jerdan will know where to find them.

> " The painful warrior, famoused for fight
> After a thousand victories once foiled,
> Is from the book of honour razed quite,
> And all the rest forgot, for which he toiled."

The new streets and squares in this neighbourhood are also on an improved plan—there is a double side-path to walk on, the shops are more roomy and richer, and you can stop to look at them in safety. This is as it should be—all we ask is common sense. Without this practical concession on their parts, in the dispute whether Paris is not better than London, it would seem to remain a question, whether it is better to walk on a mall or in a gutter, whether airy space is preferable to fetid confinement, or whether solidity and show together are not better than mere frippery? But for a real West End, for a solid substantial *cut* into the heart of a metropolis, commend me to the streets and squares on each side of the top of Oxford-street—with Grosvenor and Portman squares at one end, and Cavendish and Hanover at the other, linked together by Bruton, South-Audley, and a hundred other fine old streets, with a broad airy pavement, a display of comfort, of wealth, of taste, and rank all about you, each house seeming to have been the residence of some respectable old English family for half

a century past, and with Portland-place looking out towards Hampstead and Highgate, with their hanging gardens and lofty terraces, and Primrose-hill nestling beneath them, in green, pastoral luxury, the delight of the Cockneys, the aversion of Sir Walter and his merrymen! My favourite walk in Paris is to the Gardens of the Tuileries. Paris differs from London in this respect, that it has no suburbs. The moment you are beyond the barriers, you are in the country to all intents and purposes. You have not to wade through ten miles of straggling houses to get a breath of fresh air, or a peep at nature. It is a blessing to counterbalance the inconveniences of large cities built within walls, that they do not extend far beyond them. The superfluous population is pared off, like the pie-crust by the circumference of the dish—even on the court side, not a hundred yards from the barrier of Neuilly, you see an old shepherd tending his flock, with his dog and his crook and sheep-skin cloak, just as if it were a hundred miles off, or a hundred years ago. It was so twenty years ago. I went again to see if it was the same yesterday. The old man was gone; but there was his flock, by the road-side, and a dog and a boy, grinning with white healthy teeth, like one of Murillo's beggar-boys. It was a bright frosty noon; and the air was, in a manner, *vitreous*, from its clearness, its coolness, and hardness to the feeling. The road I speak of, frequented by English jockeys and French market-

women, riding between panniers, leads down to the Bois de Boulogne on the left, a delicious retreat, covered with copse-wood for fuel, and intersected by green-sward paths and shady alleys, running for miles in opposite directions, and terminating in a point of inconceivable brightness. Some of the woods on the borders of Wiltshire and Hampshire present exactly the same appearance, with the same delightful sylvan paths through them, and are covered in summer with hyacinths and primroses, sweetening the air, enamelling the ground, and with nightingales loading every bough with rich music. It was winter when I used to wander through the Bois de Boulogne formerly, dreaming of fabled truth and good. Somehow my thoughts and feet still take their old direction, though hailed by no friendly greetings:—

> "What though the radiance which was once so bright,
> Be now for ever vanished from my sight;
> Though nothing can bring back the hour
> Of glory in the grass—of splendour in the flower:"—

yet the fever and the agony of hope is over too, "the burden and the mystery;" the past circles my head, like a golden dream; it is a fine fragment of an unfinished poem or history; and the "worst," as Shakspeare says, "returns to good!" I cannot say I am at all annoyed (as I expected) at seeing the Bourbon court-carriages issuing out with a flourish of trumpets and a troop of horse. It looks like a fantoccini procession, a State mockery. The fine

moral lesson, the soul of greatness, is wanting. The legitimate possessors of royal power seem to be playing at *Make-Believe;* the upstarts and impostors are the true *Simon Pures*, and genuine realities. Bonaparte mounted a throne from the top of the pillar of Victory. People ask who Charles X. is? But to return from this digression.

Through the arch-way of the Tuileries, at the end of the Champs Elysées, you see the Barrier of Neuilly, like a thing of air, diminished by a fairy perspective. The effect is exquisitely light and magical. You pass through the arch-way, and are in the gardens themselves. Milton should have written those lines abroad, and in this very spot—

> "And bring with thee retired Leisure,
> That in trim gardens takes his pleasure."

True art is "nature to advantage drest;" it is here a powdered beau. The prodigality of littleness, the excess of ornament, the superficial gloss, the studied neatness, are carried to a pitch of the romantic. The Luxembourg gardens are more extensive, and command a finer view; but are not kept in the same order, are dilapidated and desultory. This is an enclosure of all sweet sights and smells, a concentration of elegance. The rest of the world is barbarous to this "paradise of dainty devices," where the imagination is spell-bound. It is a perfectly-finished miniature set in brilliants. It is a toilette for nature to dress itself; where every flower seems a narcissus!

The smooth gravel-walks, the basin of water, the swans (they might be of wax), the golden fishes, the beds of flowers, chineasters, larkspur, geraniums, bright marigolds, mignonnette ("the Frenchman's darling") scenting the air with a faint luscious perfume, the rows of orange-trees in boxes, blooming verdure and vegetable gold, the gleaming statues, the raised terraces, the stately avenues of trees, and the gray cumbrous towers of the Tuileries overlooking the whole, give an effect of enchantment to the scene. This and the man in black by Titian, in the Louvre just by (whose features form a *sombre* pendant to the gay parterres) are the two things in Paris I like best. I should never tire of walking in the one, or of looking at the other. Yet no two things can be more opposite*. The one is the essence of French, the other of Italian art. By following the windings of the river in this direction, you come to Passy—a delightful village, half-way to St. Cloud, which is situated on a rich eminence that looks down on Paris and the Seine, and so on to Versailles, where the English reside. I have not been to see them, nor they me. The whole road is interspersed with villas, and lined with rows of trees. This last is a common feature in foreign scenery. Whether from the general love of pleasurable sensations, or from the greater warmth of southern climates making the shelter from the heat

* They are as different as Mr. Moore's verses and an epic poem.

of the sun more necessary, or from the closeness of the cities making a promenade round them more desirable, the approach to almost all the principal towns abroad is indicated by shady plantations, and the neighbourhood is a succession of groves and arbours.

The Champ de Mars (the French Runnymede) is on the opposite side of the river, a little above the Champs Elysées. It is an oblong square piece of ground immediately in front of the Ecole Militaire, covered with sand and gravel, and bare of trees or any other ornament. It is left a blank, as it should be. In going to and returning from it, you pass the fine old Invalid Hospital, with its immense gilded cupola and outer-walls overgrown with vines, and meet the crippled veterans who have lost an arm or leg, fighting the battles of the Revolution, with a bit of white ribbon sticking in their button-holes, which must gnaw into their souls worse than the wounds in their flesh, if Frenchmen did not alike disregard the wounds both of their bodies and minds.

The Jardin des Plantes, situated at the other extremity of Paris, on the same side of the river, is well worth the walk there. It is delightfully laid out, with that mixture of art and nature, of the useful and ornamental, in which the French excel all the world. Every plant of every quarter of the globe is here, growing in the open air; and labelled with its common and its scientific name on it. A prodigious num-

ber of animals, wild and tame, are enclosed in separate divisions, feeding on the grass or shrubs, and leading a life of learned leisure. At least, they have as good a title to this ironical compliment as most members of colleges and seminaries of learning; for they grow fat and sleek on it. They have a great variety of the *simious* tribe. Is this necessary in France? The collection of wild beasts is not equal to our Exeter-'Change; nor are they confined in iron cages out of doors under the shade of their native trees, (as I was told), but shut up in a range of very neatly-constructed and very ill-aired apartments.

I have already mentioned the Père la Chaise—the Catacombs I have not seen, nor have I the least wish. But I have been to the top of Mont-Martre, and intend to visit it again. The air there is truly vivifying, and the view inspiring. Paris spreads out under your feet on one side, "with glistering spires and pinnacles adorned," and appears to fill the intermediate space, to the very edge of the horizon, with a sea of hazy or sparkling magnificence. All the different striking points are marked as on a map. London nowhere presents the same extent or integrity of appearance. This is either because there is no place so near to London that looks down upon it from the same elevation, or because Paris is better calculated for a panoramic view from the loftier height and azure tone of

its buildings. Its form also approaches nearer to a regular square. London, seen either from Highgate and Hampstead, or from the Dulwich side, looks like a long black wreath of smoke, with the dome of St. Paul's floating in it. The view on the other side Mont-Martre is also fine, and an extraordinary contrast to the Paris side—it is clear, brown, flat, distant, completely rustic, full of "low farms and pelting villages." You see St. Denis, where the Kings of France lie buried, and can fancy you see Montmorenci, where Rousseau lived, whose pen was near being as fatal to their race as the scythe of death. On this picturesque site, which so near London would be enriched with noble mansions, there are only a few paltry lodging-houses and tottering wind-mills. So little prone are the Parisians to extricate themselves from the sty of Epicurus; so fond of *cabinets of society*, of playing at dominoes in the coffee-houses, and of practising the art *de briller dans les Salons*; so fond are they of this, that even when the Allies were at Mont-Martre, they ran back to be the first to give an imposing account of the attack, to finish the game of the Revolution, and make the *éloge* of the new order of things. They shew you the place where the affair with the Prussians happened, as—a brilliant exploit. When will they be no longer liable to such intrusions as these, or to such a result from them? When they get rid of that eternal smile upon their countenances, or of that needle-and-thread face,

that is twisted into any shape by every circumstance that happens*, or when they can write such lines as the following, or even understand their meaning, their force or beauty, as a charm to purge their soil of insolent foes—theirs only, because the common foes of man!

> But let thy spiders that suck up thy venom,
> And heavy-gaited toads, lie in their way;
> Doing annoyance to the feet of them
> That with usurping steps do trample thee;
> Yield stinging-nettles to mine enemies;
> And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,
> Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder,
> Whose double tongue may, with a mortal touch,
> Throw death upon thy baffled enemies.

No Parisian's sides can "bear the beating of so

* The French physiognomy is like a telegraphic machine, ready to shift and form new combinations every moment. It is commonly too light and variable for repose; it is careless, indifferent, but not sunk in indolence, nor wedded to ease: as on the other hand, it is restless, rapid, extravagant, without depth or force. Is it not the same with their feelings, which are alike incapable of a habit of quiescence, or of persevering action or passion? It seems so to me. Their freedom from any tendency to drunkenness, to indulge in its dreamy stupor, or give way to its incorrigible excesses, confirms by analogy the general view of their character. I do not bring this as an accusation against them, I ask if it is not the fact; and if it will not account for many things observable in them, good, bad, and indifferent? In a word, mobility without *momentum* solves the whole riddle of the French character.

strong a passion" as these lines contain; nor have they it in them to "endure to the end for liberty's sake." They can never hope to defend the political principles which they learnt from us, till they understand our poetry, both of which originate in the same cause, the strength of our livers and the stoutness of our hearts.

CHAPTER XI.

STATUARY does not affect me like painting. I am not, I allow, a fair judge, having paid a great deal more attention to the one than to the other. Nor did I ever think of the first as a profession; and it is that perhaps which adds the sting to our love of excellence, the hope of attaining it ourselves in any particular walk. We strain our faculties to the utmost to conceive of what is most exquisite in any art to which we devote ourselves, and are doubly sensitive to it when we see it attained. Knowledge may often beget indifference, but here it begets zeal. Our affections kindled and projected forward by the ardour of pursuit, we come to the contemplation of truth and beauty with the passionate feeling of lovers; the examples of acknowledged excellence before us are the steps by which we scale the path of distinction, the spur which urges us on; and the admiration which we fondly cherish for them is the seed of future fame. No wonder that the youthful student dwells with delight and rapture on the finished works of art, when they are to his heated fancy the pledge and foretaste of immortality; when at every successful stroke of

imitation he is ready to cry out with Correggio—"I also am a painter!"—when every heightening flush of his enthusiasm is a fresh assurance to him of congenial powers—and when overlooking the million of failures (that all the world have forgot) or names of inferior note, Raphael, Titian, Guido, Salvator are each another self. Happy union of thoughts and destinies, lovelier than the hues of the rainbow! Why can it not last and span our brief date of life?

One reason, however, why I prefer painting to sculpture is, that painting is more like nature. It gives one entire and satisfactory view of an object at a particular moment of time, which sculpture never does. It is not the same in reality, I grant; but it is the same in appearance, which is all we are concerned with. A picture wants solidity, a statue wants colour. But we see the want of colour as a palpably glaring defect, and we do not see the want of solidity, the effects of which to the spectator are supplied by light and shadow. A picture is as perfect an imitation of nature as is conveyed by a looking-glass; which is all that the eye can require, for it is all it can take in for the time being. A fine picture resembles a real living man; the finest statue in the world can only resemble a man turned to stone. The one is an image, the other a cold abstraction of nature. It leaves out half the visible impression. There is therefore something a little shocking and repulsive in this art to the common eye, that requires habit and study

to reconcile us completely to it, or to make it an object of enthusiastic devotion. It does not amalgamate kindly and at once with our previous perceptions and associations. As to the comparative difficulty or skill implied in the exercise of each art, I cannot pretend to judge: but I confess it appears to me that statuary must be the most trying to the faculties. The idea of moulding a limb into shape, so as to be right from every point of view, fairly makes my head turn round, and seems to me to enhance the difficulty to an infinite degree. There is not only the extraordinary circumspection and precision required (enough to distract the strongest mind, as I should think), but if the chisel, working in such untractable materials, goes a hair's-breadth beyond the mark, there is no remedying it. It is not as in painting, where you may make a thousand blots, and try a thousand experiments, efface them all one after the other, and begin anew: the hand always trembles on the brink of a precipice, and one step over is irrecoverable. There is a story told, however, of Hogarth and Roubilliac, which, as far as it goes, may be thought to warrant a contrary inference. These artists differed about the difficulty of their several arts, and agreed to decide it by exchanging the implements of their profession with each other, and seeing which could do best without any regular preparation. Hogarth took a piece of clay, and succeeded in moulding a very tolerable bust of his friend; but when

Roubilliac, being furnished with paints and brushes, attempted to daub a likeness of a human face, he could make absolutely nothing out, and was obliged to own himself defeated. Yet Roubilliac was a man of talent, and no mean artist. It was he who, on returning from Rome where he had studied the works of Bernini and the antique, and on going to see his own performances in Westminster Abbey, exclaimed, that "they looked like tobacco-pipes, by G—d!" What sin had this man or his parents committed, that he should forfeit the inalienable birth-right of every Frenchman—imperturbable, invincible self-sufficiency? The most pleasing and natural application of sculpture is, perhaps, to the embellishment of churches and the commemoration of the dead. I don't know whether they were Roubilliac's or not, but I remember seeing many years ago in Westminster Abbey (in the part that is at present shut up) two figures of angels bending over a tomb, that affected me much in the same manner that these lines of Lord Byron's have done since—

> "And when I think that his immortal wings
> Shall one day hover o'er the sepulchre
> Of the poor child of clay that so adored him
> As he adores the highest, Death becomes
> Less terrible!"

It appears to me that sculpture, though not proper to express health or life or motion, accords admirably with the repose of the tomb; and that it cannot

be better employed than in arresting the fleeting dust in imperishable forms, and in embodying a lifeless shadow. Painting, on the contrary, from what I have seen of it in Catholic countries, seems to be out of its place on the walls of churches; it has a flat and flimsy effect contrasted with the solidity of the building, and its rich flaunting colours harmonize but ill with the solemnity and gloom of the surrounding scene.

I would go a pilgrimage to see the St. Peter Martyr, or the Jacob's Dream by Rembrandt, or Raphael's Cartoons, or some of Claude's landscapes;—but I would not go far out of my way to see the Apollo, or the Venus, or the Laocoon. I never cared for them much; nor, till I saw the Elgin Marbles, could I tell why, except for the reason just given, which does not apply to these particular statues, but to statuary in general. These are still to be found in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, with appropriate descriptive stanzas appended to them *; but they are no longer to be found in the Louvre, nor do the French seem to know they ever were there. *Out of*

* Lord Byron has merely taken up the common cant of connoisseurship, inflating it with hyperbolical and far-fetched eulogies of his own—not perceiving that the Apollo was somewhat of a coxcomb, the Venus somewhat insipid, and that the expression in the Laocoon is more of physical than of mental agony. The faces of the boys are, however, superlatively fine. They are convulsed with pain, yet fraught with feeling. He has made a better hit in interpreting the downcast look of the

sight, out of mind, is a happy motto. What is not French, either as done by themselves, or as belonging to them, is of course not worth thinking about. Be this as it may, the place is fairly emptied out. Hardly a trace remains of the old Collection to remind you of what is gone. A short list includes all of distinguished excellence—the admirable bust of Vitellius, the fine fragment of Inopus, a clothed statue of Augustus, the full-zoned Venus, and the Diana and Fawn, whose light, airy grace seems to have mocked removal. A few more are "thinly scattered to make up a shew," but the bulk, the main body of the Grecian mythology, with the flower of their warriors and heroes, were carried off by the Chevalier Canova on his shoulders, a load for Hercules! The French sculptors have nothing of their own to shew for it to fill up the gap. Like their painters, their style is either literal and rigid, or affected and burlesque. Their merit is chiefly confined to the academic figure and anatomical skill; if they go be-

Dying Gladiator, as denoting his insensibility to the noise and bustle around him:—

"He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holyday—
All this rush'd with his blood—shall he expire
And unaveng'd?—Arise! ye Goths and glut your ire!"

yond this, and wander into the regions of expression, beauty, or grace, they are apt to lose themselves. The real genius of French sculpture is to be seen in the curled wigs and swelling folds of the draperies in the statues of the age of Louis XIV. There they shone unrivalled and alone. They are the best man-milliners and *friseurs* in ancient or modern Europe. That praise cannot be denied them; but it should alarm them for their other pretensions. I recollect an essay in the *Moniteur* some years ago (very playful and very well written) to prove that a great hair-dresser was a greater character than Michael Angelo or Phidias; that his art was more an invention, more a creation out of nothing, and less a servile copy of any thing in nature. There was a great deal of ingenuity in the reasoning, and I suspect more sincerity than the writer was aware of. It expresses, I verily believe, the firm conviction of every true Frenchman. In whatever relates to the flutter and caprice of fashion, where there is no impulse but vanity, no limit but extravagance, no rule but want of meaning, they are in their element, and quite at home. Beyond that, they have no style of their own, and are a nation of second-hand artists, poets, and philosophers. Nevertheless, they have Voltaire, La Fontaine, Le Sage, Molière, Rabelais, and Montaigne—good men and true, under whatever class they come. They have also Very and Vestris. This is granted. Is it not enough? I should like to know the thing on the face of God's earth in which they allow other nations to

excel them. Nor need their sculptors be afraid of turning their talents to account, while they can execute pieces of devotion for the shrines of Saints, and classical *equivoques* for the saloons of the old or new *Noblesse.*

The foregoing remarks are general. I shall proceed to mention a few exceptions to, or confirmations of them in their *Exposé** of the present year. The *Othryadas wounded* (No. 1870), by Legendre Heral, is, I think, the least *mannered*, and most natural. It is a huge figure, powerful and somewhat clumsy (with the calves of the legs as if they had gaiters on), but it has great power and repose in it. It seems as if, without any effort, a blow from it would crush any antagonist, and reminds one of Virgil's combat of Dares and Entellus. The form of the head is characteristic, and there is a fine mixture of sternness and languor in the expression of the features. The sculptor appears to have had an eye to the countenance of the Dying Gladiator; and the figure, from

* Why do the French confound the words *exhibition* and *exposure?* One of which expresses what is creditable, and the other what is disgraceful. Is it that the sense of vanity absorbs every other consideration, turning the sense of shame, in case of exposure, into a source of triumph, and the conscious tingling feeling of ostentation in a display of talent into a flagrant impropriety? I do not lay much stress on this word-catching, which is a favourite mode of German criticism. We say, for instance, indiscriminately, that "a thing *redounds* to our credit or our disgrace."

its ease and massiness, has some resemblance to the Elgin Marbles. It is a work of great merit. The statue of *Othryadas erecting the Trophy to his Companions* (No. 1774) is less impressive, and aims at being more so. It comes under the head of *theatrical* art, that is of French art *proper*. They cannot long keep out of this. They cannot resist an attitude, a significant effect. They do not consider that the definition of Sculpture is, or ought to be, nearly like their own celebrated one of *Death*—an eternal repose! This fault may in some measure be found with the *Hercules recovering the body of Icarus from the Sea* (No. 1903), by Razzi. The body of Icarus can hardly be said to have found a resting-place. Otherwise, the figure is finely designed, and the face is one of considerable beauty and expression. The Hercules is a man-mountain. From the size and arrangement of this group, it seems more like a precipice falling on one's head, than a piece of sculpture. The effect is not so far pleasant. If a complaint lies against this statue on the score of unwieldy and enormous size, it is relieved by No. 1775, *A Zephyr thwarting the loves of a Butterfly and a Rose*, Boyer. Here French art is on its legs again, and in the true vignette style. A Zephyr, a Butterfly, and a Rose, all in one group—Charming! In such cases the lightness, the prettiness, the flutter, and the affectation are extreme, and such as no one but themselves will think of rivalling. One of their greatest

and most successful attempts is the *Grâce aux Prisonniers*, No. 1802, by David. Is it not the *Knife-grinder* of the ancients, thrown into a more heroic attitude, and with an impassioned expression? However this may be, there is real boldness in the design, and animation in the countenance, a feeling of disinterested generosity contending with the agonies of death. I cannot give much praise to their religious subjects in general. The French of the present day are not bigots, but sceptics in such matters; and the cold, formal indifference of their artists appears in their works. The *Christ confounding the incredulity of St. Thomas* (by Jacquot) is not calculated to produce this effect on anybody else. They treat classical subjects much more *con amore*; but the mixture of the Christian Faith and of Pagan superstitions is at least as reprehensible in the present Collection as in Milton's Paradise Lost. Among pieces of devotion, *The Virgin and Child*, and the *St. Catherine* of Cortot (Nos. 1791-22) struck me as the best. There is a certain delicacy of finishing and graceful womanhood about both, which must make them very acceptable accompaniments to Catholic zeal. The French excel generally in emblematic subjects, or in whatever depends on accuracy and invention in costume, of which there are several examples here. What I liked best, however, were some of their studies of the naked figure, which have great simplicity and ease, such as a *Nymph making a Garland of Flowers*,

No. 1888 (Parmentier), and a *Youth going to bathe*, No. 1831 (Espercieux). This last figure, in particular, appears to be really sliding down into the bath. *Cupid tormenting the Soul* (after Chaudet) is a very clever and spirited design, in bronze. Their busts, in general, are not excellent. There are, however, a few exceptions, one especially of a Mademoiselle Hersilie de F——, by Gayrard, which is a perfect representation of nature. It is an unaffected, admirable portrait, with good humour and good sense playing over every feature of the face.

In fine, I suspect there is nothing in the French Saloon of Sculpture greatly to stagger or entirely to overset the opinion of those who have a prejudice against the higher pretensions of French art. They have no masterpieces equal to Chantry's busts, nor to Flaxman's learned outlines, nor to the polished elegance of Canova; to say nothing of the exquisite beauty and symmetry of the antique, nor of the Elgin Marbles, among which the Theseus sits in form like a demi-god, basking on a golden cloud. If ever there were models of the Fine Arts fitted to give an impulse to living genius, these are they *. With enough to teach

* It were to be wished that the French sculptors would come over and look at the Elgin Marbles, as they are arranged with great care and some pomp in the British Museum. They may smile to see that we are willing to remove works of art from their original places of abode, though we will not allow others to do so. These noble fragments of antiquity might startle

the truest, highest style in art, they are not in sufficient numbers or preservation to distract or discourage emulation. With these and Nature for our guides,

our fastidious neighbours a little at first from their rude state and their simplicity, but I think they would gain upon them by degrees, and convince their understandings, if they did not subdue their affections. They are indeed an equally instructive lesson and unanswerable rebuke to them and to us—to them for thinking that finishing every part *alike* is perfection, and to us who imagine that to leave every part alike unfinished is grandeur. They are as remote from finicalness as grossness, and combine the parts with the whole in the manner that nature does. Every part is given, but not ostentatiously, and only as it would appear in the circumstances. There is an alternate action and repose. If one muscle is strained, another is proportionably relaxed. If one limb is in action and another at rest, they come under a different law, and the muscles are not brought out nor the skin tightened in the one as in the other. There is a flexibility and sway of the limbs and of the whole body. The flesh has the softness and texture of flesh, not the smoothness or stiffness of stone. There is an undulation and a liquid flow on the surface, as the breath of genius moved the mighty mass: they are the finest forms in the most striking attitudes, and with every thing in its place, proportion, and degree, uniting the ease, truth, force, and delicacy of Nature. They shew nothing but the artist's thorough comprehension of, and entire docility to that great teacher. There is no *petit-maitreship*, no pedantry, no attempt at a display of science, or at forcing the parts into an artificial symmetry, but it is like cutting a human body out of a block of marble, and leaving it to act for itself with all the same springs, levers, and internal machinery. It was said of Shakspeare's dramas, that they were the *logic of passion;* and it may be affirmed of

we might do something in sculpture, if we were not indolent and unapt. The French, whatever may be their defects, cannot be charged with want of labour and study. The only charge against them (a heavy one, if true) is want of taste and genius.

the Elgin Marbles, that they are the *logic of form*.—One part being given, another cannot be otherwise than it is. There is a mutual understanding and re-action throughout the whole frame. The Apollo and other antiques are not equally simple and severe. The limbs have too much an appearance of being cased in marble, of making a display of every recondite beauty, and of balancing and answering to one another, like the rhymes in verse. The Elgin Marbles are harmonious, flowing, varied prose. In a word, they are like casts after the finest nature. Any cast from nature, however inferior, is in the same style. Let the French and English sculptors make casts continually. The one will see in them the parts everywhere given—the other will see them everywhere given in subordination to, and as forming materials for a whole.

CHAPTER XII.

THE French themselves think less about their music than any other of their pretensions. It is almost a sore subject with them; for it interrupts their talking, and they had rather hear nothing about it, except as an accompaniment to a jig. Their ears are, in this respect, *in their heels*, and it is only the light and giddy that they at all endure. They have no idea of *cadence* in any of the arts—of the rise and fall of the passions—of the elevations or depressions of hope or fear in poetry—of alternate light or shade in pictures—all is reduced (as nearly as possible) in their minds to the level of petty, vapid self-satisfaction, or to dry and systematic prosing for the benefit of others. But they must be more particularly at a loss in music, which requires the deepest feeling, and admits the least of the impertinence of explanation, which mounts on its own raptures and is dissolved in its own tenderness; which has no witness or vouchers but the inward sense of delight, and rests its faith on the speechless eloquence, the rich, circling intoxication of inarticulate but heart-felt sounds. The French have therefore no national music, except a few meagre *chansons*,

and their only idea of musical excellence is either rapidity or loudness of execution. You perceive the effect of this want of enthusiasm even in the streets,—they have neither barrel-organs nor blind fiddlers as with us, who are willing to pay for the encouragement of the arts, however indifferently we may practise them; nor does the national spirit break out from every strolling party or village group, as it is said to do in Italy. A French servant-girl, while she is cleaning out a room, lays down her brush to dance—she takes it up to finish her work, and lays it down again to dance, impelled by the lightness of her head and of her heels. But you seldom hear her sing at her work, and never, if there is any one within hearing to talk to.—The French Opera is a splendid, but a comparatively empty theatre. It is nearly as large (I should think) as the King's Theatre in the Hay-market, and is in a semi-circular form. The pit (the evening I was there) was about half full of men, in their black, dingy *sticky-looking* dresses; and there were a few plainly-dressed women in the boxes. But where was that blaze of beauty and fashion, of sparkling complexions and bright eyes, that streams like a galaxy from the boxes of our Opera-house—like a Heaven of loveliness let half-way down upon the earth, and charming "the upturned eyes of wondering mortals," before which the thrilling sounds that circle through the House seem to tremble with delight and drink in new rapture from its conscious presence, and to which

the mimic Loves and Graces are proud to pay their distant, smiling homage? Certainly it was not here; nor do I know where the sun of beauty hides itself in France. I have seen but three rays of it since I came, gilding a dark and pitchy cloud! It was not so in Rousseau's time, for these very *Loges* were filled with the most beautiful women of the Court, who came to see his *Devin du Village*, and whom he heard murmuring around him in the softest accents—"*Tous ces sons la vont au cœur!*" The change is, I suppose, owing to the Revolution; but whatever it is owing to, the monks have not, by their return, banished this conventual gloom from their theatres; nor is there any of that airy, flaunting, florid, butterfly, gauzy, variegated appearance to be found in them that they have with us. These gentlemen still keep up the farce of refusing actors burial in consecrated ground; the mob pelt them, and the critics are even with them by going to see the representation of the Tartuffe!

I found but little at the Royal Academy of Music (as it is affectedly called) to carry off this general dulness of effect, either through the excellence or novelty of the performances. A Mademoiselle Noel (who seems to be a favourite) made her *debut* in Dido. Though there was nothing very striking, there was nothing offensive in her representation of the character. For any thing that appeared in her style of singing or acting, she might be a very pleasing, mo-

dest, unaffected English girl performing on an English stage. There was not a single trait of French *bravura* or grimace. Her execution, however, seldom rose higher than an agreeable mediocrity; and with considerable taste and feeling, her powers seemed to be limited. She produced her chief effect in the latter and more pathetic scenes, and ascended the funeral pile with dignity and composure. Is it not strange (if contradictions and hasty caprices taken up at random, and laid down as laws, were strange in this centre of taste and refinement) that the French should raise such an outcry against our assaults at arms and executions on the stage, and yet see a young and beautiful female prepare to give herself the fatal blow, without manifesting the smallest repugnance or dissatisfaction?—Æneas and Iarbas were represented by Messrs. Mourritt and Derivis. The first was insipid, the last a perfect Stentor. He spoke or sung all through with an unmitigated ferocity of purpose and manner, and with lungs that seemed to have been forged expressly for the occasion. Ten bulls could not bellow louder, nor a whole street-full of frozen-out gardeners at Christmas. His barbarous tunic and accoutrements put one strongly in mind of Robinson Crusoe, while the modest demeanour and painted complexion of the pious Æneas bore a considerable analogy to the submissive advance and rosy cheeks of that usual accompaniment of English travelling, who ushers himself into the room at intervals, with awk-

ward bows, and his hat twirled round in his hands, "to hope you'll remember the coachman." The Æneas of the poet, however, was a shabby fellow, and had but justice done him.

I had leisure during this *otiose* performance to look around me, and as "it is my vice to spy into abuses," the first thing that struck me was the prompter. Any Frenchman who has that sum at his disposal, should give ten thousand francs a year for this situation. It must be a source of ecstasy to him. For not an instant was he quiet—tossing his hands in the air, darting them to the other side of the score which he held before him in front of the stage, snapping his fingers, nodding his head, beating time with his feet; and this not mechanically, or as if it were a drudgery he was forced to go through, and would be glad to have done with, but with unimpaired glee and vehemence of gesture, jerking, twisting, fidgeting, wriggling, starting, stamping, as if the incessant motion had fairly turned his head, and every muscle in his frame were saturated with the spirit of quicksilver. To be in continual motion for four hours, and to direct the motions of others by the wagging of a finger, to be not only an object of important attention to the stage and orchestra, but (in his own imagination) to pit, boxes, and gallery, as the pivot on which the whole grand machinery of that grandest of all machines, the French Opera, turns—this is indeed, for a Parisian, the acme of felicity! Every nerve must thrill with elec-

trical satisfaction, and every pore into which vanity can creep tingle with self-conceit! Not far from this restless automaton (as if extremes met, or the volatility of youth subsided into a sort of superannuated still-life) sat an old gentleman in front of the pit, with his back to me, a white powdered head, the curls sticking out behind, and a coat of the finest black. This was all I saw of him for some time—he did not once turn his head or shift his position, any more than a wig and coat stuck upon a barber's block—till I suddenly missed him, and soon after saw him seated on the opposite side of the house, his face as yellow and hard as a piece of mahogany, but without expressing either pleasure or pain. Neither the fiddlers' elbows nor the dancers' legs moved him one jot. His fiddling fancies and his dancing-days were flown, and had left this shadow, this profile, this mummy of a French gentleman of the old *régime* behind. A Frenchman has no object in life but to talk and move with *éclat*, and when he ceases to do either, he has no heart to do any thing. Deprived of his vivacity, his thoughtlessness, his animal spirits, he becomes a piece of costume, a finely-powdered wig, an embroidered coat, a pair of shoe-buckles, a gold cane, or a snuff-box. Drained of mere sensations and of their youthful blood, the old fellows seem like the ghosts of the young ones, and have none of their overweening offensiveness, or teasing officiousness. I can hardly conceive of a young French *gentle-*

man, nor of an old one who is otherwise. The latter come up to my *ideal* of this character, cut, as it were, out of pasteboard, moved on springs, amenable to forms, crimped and starched like a cravat, without a single tart ebullition, or voluntary motion. Some of them may be seen at present gliding along the walks of the Tuileries, and the sight of them is good for sore eyes. They are also thinly sprinkled through the play-house; for the drama and the *belles-lettres* were in their time the amusement and the privilege of the Court, and the contrast of their powdered heads and pale faces makes the rest of the audience appear like a set of greasy, impudent mechanics. A Frenchman nothing without powder, an Englishman is nothing with it. The character of the one is artificial, that of the other natural. The women of France do not submit to the regular approaches and the sober discipline of age so well as the men. I had rather be in company with an old French gentleman than a young one; I prefer a young Frenchwoman to an old one. They aggravate the encroachments of age by contending with them, and instead of displaying the natural graces and venerable marks of that period of life, paint and patch their wrinkled faces, and *toupee* and curl their grizzled locks, till they look like Friesland hens, and are a caricature and burlesque of themselves. The old women in France that figure at the theatre or elsewhere, have very much the appearance of having kept a tavern or a booth at a fair.

or of having been mistresses of a place of another description, for the greater part of their lives. A *mannish* hardened look and character survives the wreck of beauty and of female delicacy.

Of all things that I see here, it surprises me the most that the French should fancy they can dance. To dance is to move with grace and harmony to music. But the French, whether men or women, have no idea of dancing but that of moving with agility, and of distorting their limbs in every possible way, till they really alter the structure of the human form. By grace I understand the natural movements of the human body, heightened into dignity or softened into ease, each posture or step blending harmoniously into the rest. There is grace in the waving of the branch of a tree or in the bounding of a stag, because there is freedom and unity of motion. But the French Opera-dancers think it graceful to stand on one leg or on the points of their toes, or with one leg stretched out behind them, as if they were going to be shod, or to raise one foot at right angles with their bodies, and twirl themselves round like a *te-totum*, to see how long they can spin, and then stop short all of a sudden; or to skim along the ground, flat-footed, like a spider running along a cobweb, or to pop up and down like a pea on a tobacco-pipe, or to stick in their backs till another part projects out behind *comme des volails*, and to strut about like peacocks with infirm, vain-glorious steps, or to turn out their toes till their

feet resemble apes, or to raise one foot above their heads, and turn swiftly round upon the other, till the petticoats of the female dancers (for I have been thinking of them) rise above their garters, and display a pair of spindle-shanks, like the wooden ones of a wax-doll, just as shapeless and as tempting. There is neither voluptuousness nor grace in a single attitude or movement, but a very studious and successful attempt to shew in what a number of uneasy and difficult positions the human body can be put with the greatest rapidity of evolution. It is not that they do all this with much more to redeem it, but they do all this, and do nothing else. It would be very well as an exhibition of tumbler's tricks, or as rope-dancing (which are only meant to surprise), but it is bad as Opera-dancing, if opera-dancing aspires to be one of the Fine Arts, or even a handmaid to them; that is, to combine with mechanical dexterity a sense of the beautiful in form and motion, and a certain analogy to sentiment. "The common people," says the Author of *Waverley*, "always prefer exertion and agility to grace." Is that the case also with the most refined people upon earth? These antics and vagaries, this kicking of heels and shaking of feet as if they would come off, might be excusable in the men, for they shew a certain strength and muscular activity; but in the female dancers they are unpardonable. What is said of poetry might be applied to the sex. *Non sat est pulchra poemata esse, dulcia sunto.* So women

who appear in public, should be soft and lovely as well as skilful and active, or they ought not to appear at all. They owe it to themselves and others. As to some of the ridiculous extravagances of this theatre, such as turning out their toes and holding back their shoulders, one would have thought the Greek statues might have taught their scientific professors better—if French artists did not see every thing with French eyes, and lament all that differs from their established practice as a departure from the line of beauty. They are sorry that the Venus does not hold up her head like a boarding-school miss—

"And would ask the Apollo to dance!"

In three months' practice, and with proper tuition, Greek forms would be French, and they would be perfect!—Mademoiselles Fanny and Noblet, I kiss your hands; but I have no pardon to beg of Madame Le Gallois, for she looked like a lady (very tightly laced) in the ballet, and played like a heroine in the pantomime part of *La Folle par Amour*. There was a violent start at the first indication of her madness, that alarmed me a little, but all that followed was natural, modest, and affecting in a high degree. The French turn their Opera-stage into a mad-house; they turn their mad-houses (at least they have one constructed on this principle) into theatres of gaiety, where they rehearse ballets, operas, and plays. If dancing were an antidote to madness, one would think the French would be always in their right senses.

I was told I ought to see *Nina*, or *La Folle par Amour* at the Salle Louvois or Italian Theatre. If I went for that purpose, it would be rather with a wish than from any hope of seeing it better done. I went however:

"Oh for a beaker full of the warm South!"

It was to see the *Gazza Ladra*. The house was full, the evening sultry, a hurry and bustle in the lobbies, an eagerness in the looks of the assembled crowd: The audience seemed to be in earnest, and to have imbibed an interest from the place. On the stage there were rich dresses and voices, the tones of passion, ease, nature, animation; in short, the scene had a soul in it. One wondered how one was in Paris, with their pasteboard maps of the passions, and thin-skinned, dry-lipped humour. Signora Mombelli played the humble, but interesting heroine charmingly, with truth, simplicity, and feeling. Her voice is neither rich nor sweet, but it is clear as a bell. Signor Pellegrini played the intriguing Magistrate, with a solemnity and farcical drollery, that I would not swear is much inferior to Liston. But I swear, that Brunet (whom I saw the other night, and had seen before without knowing it) is not equal to Liston. Yet he is a feeble, quaint diminutive of that original. He squeaks and gibbers oddly enough at the *Théâtre des Variétés*, like a mouse in the hollow of a musty cheese, his small eyes peering out, and his sharp teeth nibbling at the remains of some faded joke.

The French people of quality go to the Italian Opera, but they do not attend to it. The *tabbies* of the Court are tabbies still; and took no notice of what was passing on the stage on this occasion, till the tolling of the bell made a louder and more disagreeable noise than themselves; this they seemed to like. They behave well at their own theatres, but it would be a breach of etiquette to do so anywhere else. A girl in the gallery (an Italian by her complexion, and from her interest in the part) was crying bitterly at the story of the *Maid and the Magpie*, while three Frenchmen, in the *Troisième Loge*, were laughing at her the whole time. I said to one of them, "It was not a thing to laugh at, but to admire." He turned away, as if the remark did not come within his notions of sentiment. This did not stagger me in my theory of the French character; and when one is possessed of nothing but a theory, one is glad, not sorry to keep it, though at the expense of others*.

* For some account of Madame Pasta's acting in *Nina*, I take the liberty to refer to a volume of TABLE-TALK, just published.

CHAPTER XIII.

We left Paris in the Diligence, and arrived at Fontainbleau the first night. The accommodations at the inn were indifferent, and not cheap. The palace is a low straggling mass of very old buildings, having been erected by St. Louis in the 12th century, whence he used to date his Rescripts, "From my Deserts of Fontainbleau!" It puts one in mind of Monkish legends, of faded splendour, of the leaden spouts and uncouth stone-cherubim of a country church-yard. It is empty or gaudy within, stiff and heavy without. Henry IV. figures on the walls with the fair Gabrielle, like the Tutelary Satyr of the place, keeping up the remembrance of old-fashioned royalty and gallantry. They here shew you the table (a plain round piece of mahogany (on which Buonaparte in 1814 signed *the abdication of the human race, in favour of the hereditary proprietors of the species.* We walked forward a mile or two before the coach the next day on the road to Montargis. It presents a long, broad, and stately avenue without a turning, as far as the eye can reach, and is skirted on each side by a wild, woody, rocky scenery. The birch-trees, with their grey stems and light glittering branches, silvered over the

darker back-ground, and afforded a striking contrast to the brown earth and green moss beneath. There was a stillness in the woods, which affects the mind the more in objects whose very motion is gentleness. The day was dull, but quite mild, though in the middle of January. The situation of Fontainbleau is certainly interesting and fine. It stands in the midst of an extensive forest, intersected with craggy precipices and rugged ranges of hills; and the various roads leading to or from it are cut out of a wilderness, which a hermit might inhabit. The approach to the different towns in France has, in this respect, the advantage over ours; for, from burning wood instead of coal, they must have large woods in the neighbourhood, which clothe the country round them, and afford, as Pope expresses it,

"In summer shade, in winter fire."

We dig our fuel out of the bowels of the earth, and have a greater portion of its surface left at our disposal, which we devote not to ornament, but use. A copse-wood or an avenue of trees however, makes a greater addition to the beauty of a town than a coal-pit or a steam-engine in its vicinity.

When the Diligence came up, and we took our seats in the *coupé* (which is that part of a French stage-coach which resembles an old shattered post-chaise, placed in front of the main body of it) we found a French lady occupying the third place in it, whose delight at our entrance was as great as if we had

joined her on some desert island, and whose mortification was distressing when she learnt we were not going the whole way with her. She complained of the cold of the night air; but this she seemed to dread less than the want of company. She said she had been deceived, for she had been told the coach was full, and was in despair that she should not have a soul to speak to all the way to Lyons. We got out, notwithstanding, at the inn at Montargis, where we met with a very tolerable reception, and were waited on at supper by one of those Maritorneses that perfectly astonish an English traveller. Her joy at our arrival was as extreme as if her whole fortune depended on it. She laughed, danced, sung, fairly sprung into the air, bounced into the room, nearly overset the table, hallooed and talked as loud as if she had been alternately ostler and chamber-maid. She was as rough and boisterous as any country bumpkin at a wake or statute-fair; and yet so full of rude health and animal spirits, that you were pleased instead of being offended. In England, a girl with such boorish manners would not be borne; but her good-humour kept pace with her coarseness, and she was as incapable of giving as of feeling pain. There is something in the air in France that carries off the *blue devils!*

The mistress of the inn, however, was a little peaking, pining woman, with her face wrapped up in flannel, and not quite so inaccessible to nervous im-

pressions; and when I asked the girl, "What made her speak so loud?" she answered for her, "To make people deaf!" This side-reproof did not in the least moderate the brazen tones of her help-mate, but rather gave a new fillip to her spirits; though she was less on the alert than the night before, and appeared to the full as much bent on arranging her curls in the looking-glass when she came into the room, as on arranging the breakfast things on the tea-board.

We staid here till one o'clock on Sunday (the 16th,) waiting the arrival of the Lyonnais, in which we had taken our places forward, and which I thought would never arrive. Let no man trust to a placard stuck on the walls of Paris, advertising the cheapest and most expeditious mode of conveyance to all parts of the world. It may be no better than a snare to the unwary. The Lyonnais, I thought from the advertisement, was the *Swift-sure* of Diligences. It was to arrive ten hours before any other Diligence; it was the most compact, the most elegant of modern vehicles. From the description and the print of it, it seemed "a thing of life," a minion of the fancy. To see it stand in a state of disencumbered abstraction, it appeared a self-impelling machine; or if it needed aid, was horsed, unlike your Paris Diligences, by nimble, airy Pegasuses. To look at the *fac-simile* of it that was put into your hand, you would say it might run or fly—might traverse the earth, or whirl

you through the air, without let or impediment, so light was it to outward appearance in structure "fit for speed succinct"—a chariot for *Puck* or *Ariel* to ride in! This was the account I had (or something like it) from Messieurs the Proprietors at the *Cour des Fontaines*. "Mark how a plain tale shall put them down." Those gentlemen came to me after I had paid for two places as far as Nevers, to ask me to resign them in favour of two Englishmen, who wished to go the whole way, and to re-engage them for the following evening. I said I could not do that; but as I had a dislike to travelling at night, I would go on to Montargis by some other conveyance, and proceed by the Lyonnais, which would arrive there at eight or nine on Sunday morning, as far as I could that night. I set out on the faith of this understanding. I had some difficulty in finding the Office *sur la place*, to which I had been directed, and which was something between a stable, a kitchen, and a cook-shop. I was led to it by a shabby *double* or counterpart of the Lyonnais, which stood before the door, empty, dirty, bare of luggage, waiting the Paris one, which had not yet arrived. It drove into town four hours afterwards, with three foundered *hacks*, with the postilion and *Conducteur* for its complement of passengers, the last occupying the left-hand corner of the *coupé* in solitary state, with a whisp of straw thrust through a broken pane of one of the front windows, and a tassel of blue and

yellow fringe hanging out of the other; and with that mixture of despondency and *fierté* in his face, which long and uninterrupted pondering on the state of the way-bill naturally produces in such circumstances. He seized upon me and my trunks as lawful prize; he afterwards insisted on my going forward in the middle of the night to Lyons, (contrary to my agreement,) and I was obliged to comply, or to sleep upon trusses of straw in a kind of out-house. We quarrelled incessantly, but I could not help laughing, for he sometimes looked like my old acquaintance, Dr. S., and sometimes like my friend, A——— H———, of Edinburgh. He said we should reach Lyons the next evening, and we got there twenty-four hours after the time. He told me for my comfort, the reason of his being so late was, that two of his horses had fallen down dead on the road. He had to raise relays of horses all the way, as if we were travelling through a hostile country; quarrelled with all the postilions about an abatement of a few sous; and once our horses were arrested in the middle of the night by a farmer who refused to trust him; and he had to go before the Mayor, as soon as day broke. We were quizzed by the post-boys, the inn-keepers, the peasants all along the road, as a shabby concern; our *Conducteur* bore it all, like another *Candide*. We stopped at all the worst inns in the outskirts of the towns, where nothing was ready; or when it was, was not eatable. The second morning we were to break-

fast at Moulins; when we alighted, our guide told us it was eleven: the clock in the kitchen pointed to three. As he laughed in my face when I complained of his misleading me, I told him that he was "*un impudent*," and this epithet sobered him the rest of the way. As we left Moulins, the crimson clouds of evening streaked the west, and I had time to think of Sterne's *Maria*. The people at the inn, I suspect, had never heard of her. There was no trace of romance about the house. Certainly, mine was not a Sentimental Journey. Is it not provoking to come to a place, that has been consecrated by "famous poet's pen," as a breath, a name, a fairy-scene, and find it a dull, dirty town? Let us leave the realities to shift for themselves, and think only of those bright tracts that have been reclaimed for us by the fancy, where the perfume, the sound, the vision, and the joy still linger, like the soft light of evening skies! Is the story of Maria the worse, because I am travelling a dirty road in a rascally Diligence? Or is it an injury done us by the author to have invented for us what we should not have met with in reality? Has it not been read with pleasure by thousands of readers, though the people at the inn had never heard of it? Yet Sterne would have been vexed to find that the fame of his Maria had never reached the little town of Moulins. We are always dissatisfied with the good we have, and always punished for our unreasonableness.

At Palisseau (the road is rich in melo-dramatic recollections) it became pitch-dark; you could not see your hand; I entreated to have the lamp lighted; our *Conducteur* said it was broken (*cassé*). With much persuasion, and the ordering a bottle of their best wine, which went round among the people at the inn, we got a lantern with a rushlight in it, but the wind soon blew it out, and we went on our way darkling; the road lay over a high hill, with a loose muddy bottom between two hedges, and as we did not attempt to trot or gallop, we came safe to the level ground on the other side. We breakfasted at Rouane, where we were first shewn into the kitchen, while they were heating a suffocating stove in a squalid *salle à manger*. There, while I was sitting half dead with cold and fatigue, a boy came and scraped a wooden dresser close at my ear, with a noise to split one's brain, and with true French *nonchalance*; and a portly landlady, who had risen just as we had done breakfasting, ushered us to our carriage with the airs and graces of a Madame Maintenon. In France you meet with the court address in a stable-yard. In other countries you may find grace in a cottage or a wilderness; but it is simple, unconscious grace, without the full-blown pride and strut of *mannered* confidence and presumption. A woman in France is graceful by going out of her sphere; not by keeping within it.—In crossing the bridge at Rouane, the sun shone brightly on the river and shipping, which had a

busy cheerful aspect; and we began to ascend the Bourbonnois under more flattering auspices. We got out and walked slowly up the sounding road. I found that the morning air refreshed and braced my spirits; and that even the continued fatigue of the journey, which I had dreaded as a hazardous experiment, was a kind of seasoning to me. I was less exhausted than the first day. I will venture to say, that for an invalid, sitting up all night is better than lying in bed all day. Hardships, however dreadful to nervous apprehensions, by degrees give us strength and resolution to endure them: whereas effeminacy softens and renders us less and less capable of encountering pain or difficulty. It is the love of indulgence, or the shock of the first privation or effort, that confirms almost all the weaknesses of body or mind. As we loitered up the long, winding ascent of the road from Rouane, we occasionally approached the brink of some Alpine declivity tufted with pine trees, and noticed the white villas, clustering and scattered, which in all directions spotted the very summits of that vast and gradual amphitheatre of hills which overlooked the neighbouring town. The Bourbonnois is the first large chain of hills piled one upon another, and extending range beyond range, that you come to on the route to Italy, and that occupy a wide-spread district, like a mighty conqueror, with uniform and growing magnificence. To those who have

chiefly seen detached mountains or abrupt precipices rising from the level surface of the ground, the effect is exceedingly imposing and grand. The descent on the other side into Tarare is more sudden and dangerous; and you avoid passing over the top of the mountain (along which the road formerly ran) by one of those fine, broad, firmly-cemented roads with galleries and bridges, which bespeak at once the master-hand that raised them. Tarare is a neat little town, famous for the manufacture of serges and calicoes. We had to stop here for three-quarters of an hour, waiting for fresh horses; and as we sat in the *coupé* in this helpless state, the horses taken out, the sun shining in, and the wind piercing through every cranny of the broken panes and rattling sash-windows, the postilion came up and demanded to know if we were English, as there were two English gentlemen who would be glad to see us. I excused myself from getting out, but said I should be happy to speak to them. Accordingly, my informant beckoned to a young man in black, who was standing at a little distance in a state of anxious expectation, and who coming to the coach-door said, he presumed we were from London, and that he had taken the liberty to pay his respects to us. His friend, he said, who was staying with him, was ill in bed, or he would have done himself the same pleasure. He had on a pair of wooden clogs turned up and pointed at the toes in the

manner of the country (which he recommended to me as useful for climbing the hills if ever I should come into those parts) warm worsted mittens, and had a thin, genteel, shivering aspect. I expected every moment he would tell me his name or business; but all I learnt was that he and his friend had been here some time, and that they could not get away till spring, that there were no entertainments, that trade was flat, and that the French seemed to him a very different people from the English. The fact is, he found himself quite at a loss in a French country-town, and had no other resource or way of amusing himself, than by looking out for the Diligences as they passed, and trying to hear news from England. He stood at his own door, and waved his hand with a melancholy air as we rode by, and no doubt instantly went up stairs to communicate to his sick friend, that he had conversed with two English people.

Our delay at Tarare had deprived us of nearly an hour of day-light; and, besides, the miserable foundered jades of horses, that we had to get on with in this paragon of Diligences, were quite unequal to the task of dragging it up and down the hills on the road to Lyons, which was still twenty miles distant. The night was dark, and we had no light. I found it was quite hopeless when we should reach our journey's end (if we did not break our necks by the way) and

that both were matters of very great indifference to Mons. *le Conducteur*, who was only bent on saving the pockets of Messieurs his employers, and who had no wish, like me, to see the Vatican! He affected to make bargains for horses, which always failed and added to our delay; and lighted his lantern once or twice, but it always went out. At last I said that I had intended to give him a certain sum for himself, but that if we did not arrive in Lyons by ten o'clock at night, he might depend upon it I would not give him a single farthing. This had the desired effect. He got out at the next village we came to, and three stout horses were fastened to the harness. He also procured a large piece of candle (with a reserve of another piece of equal length and thickness in his lantern) and held it in his hand the whole way, only shifting it from one hand to the other, as he grew tired, and biting his lips and making wry faces at this new office of a *candelabrum*, which had been thrust upon him much against his will. I was not sorry, for he was one of the most disagreeable Frenchmen I ever met with, having all the indifference and self-sufficiency of his countrymen with none of their usual obligingness. He seemed to me a person out of his place (a thing you rarely discover in France)—a broken-down tradesman, or "one that had had misfortunes," and who neither liked nor was fit for his present situation of *Conducteur* to a Diligence without

funds, without horses, and without passengers. We arrived in safety at Lyons at eleven o'clock at night, and were conducted to the *Hotel des Couriers*, where we, with some difficulty, procured a lodging and a supper, and were attended by a brown, greasy, dark-haired, good-humoured, awkward gypsey of a wench from the south of France, who seemed just caught; stared and laughed, and forgot every thing she went for; could not help exclaiming every moment—"*Que Madame a le peau blanc!*" from the contrast to her own dingy complexion and dirty skin, took a large brass-pan of scalding milk, came and sat down by me on a bundle of wood, and drank it; said she had had no supper, for her head ached, and declared the English were *braves gens*, and that the Bourbons were *bons enfans*, started up to look through the key-hole, and whispered through her broad strong-set teeth, that a fine Madam was descending the staircase, who had been to dine with a great gentleman, offered to take away the supper things, left them, and called us the next morning with her head and senses in a state of even greater confusion than they were over-night. The familiarity of common servants in France surprises the English at first; but it has nothing offensive in it, any more than the goodnatured gambols and freedoms of a Newfoundland dog. It is quite natural.

Lyons is a fine, dirty town. The streets are good,

but so high and narrow, that they look like sinks of filth and gloom. The shops are mere dungeons. Yet two noble rivers water the city, the Rhone and the Saone—the one broad and majestic, the other more confined and impetuous in its course, and join a little below the town to pour their friendly streams into the Mediterranean. The square is spacious and handsome, and the heights of St. Just, that overlook it, command a fine view of the town, the bridges, both rivers, the hills of Provence, the road to Chambery, and the Alps, with their snowy tops propping the clouds. The sight of them effectually deterred me from attempting to go by Geneva and the Simplon; and we were contented (for this time) with the humbler passage of Mount Cenis. Here is the *Hotel de Notre Dâme de Piété*, which is shewn you as the inn where Rousseau stopped on his way to Paris, when he went to overturn the French Monarchy by the force of style. I thought of him, as we came down the mountain of Tarare, in his gold-laced hat, and with his *jet d'eau* playing. If they could but have known who was coming, how many battalions would have been sent out to meet him; what a ringing of alarm-bells, what a beating of drums, what raising of drawbridges, what barring of gates, what examination of passports, what processions of priests, what meetings of magistrates, what confusion in the towns, what a panic through the country, what telegraphic despatches to

the Court of Versailles, what couriers posting to all parts of Europe, what manifestoes from armies, what a hubbub of Holy Alliances, and all for what? To prevent one man from speaking what he and every other man felt, and whose only fault was that the beatings of the human heart had found an echo in his pen! At Lyons I saw this inscription over a door: *Ici ontrouve le seul et unique depôt de l'encre sans pareil et incorruptible*—which appeared to me to contain the whole secret of French poetry. I went into a shop to buy M. Martine's *Death of Socrates*, which I saw in the window, but they would neither let me have that copy nor get me another. The French are not "a nation of shopkeepers." They had quite as lieve see you walk out of their shops as come into them. While I was waiting for an answer, a French servant in livery brought in four volumes of the *History of a Foundling*, an improved translation, in which it was said the *morceaux* omitted by M. de la Place were restored. I was pleased to see my old acquaintance Tom Jones, with his French coat on. The poetry of M. Alphonse Martine and of M. Casimir de la Vigne circulates in the provinces and in Italy, through the merit of the authors and the favour of the critics. L. H. tells me that the latter is a great Bonapartist, and talks of "the tombs of the brave." He said I might form some idea of M. Martine's attempts to be great and *unfrenchified* by the frontispiece to one of his poems,

in which a young gentleman in an heroic attitude is pointing to the sea in a storm, with his other hand round a pretty girl's waist. I told H. this poet had lately married a lady of fortune. He said, "That's the girl." He also said very well, I thought, that "the French seemed born to puzzle the Germans." Why are there not salt-spoons in France? In England it is a piece of barbarism to put your knife into a salt-cellar with another. But in France the distinction between grossness and refinement is done away. Every thing there is refined!

CHAPTER XIV.

THERE was a Diligence next day for Turin over Mount Cenis, which went only twice a week (stopping at night) and I was glad to secure (as I thought) two places in the interior at seventy francs a seat, for 240 miles. The fare from Paris to Lyons, a distance of 360 miles, was only fifty francs each, which is four times as cheap; but the difference was accounted for to me, from there being no other conveyance, which was an arbitrary reason, and from the number and expense of horses necessary to drag a heavy double coach over mountainous roads. Besides, it was a Royal Messagerie, and I was given to understand that Messrs. Bonnafoux paid the King of Sardinia a thousand crowns a year for permission to run a Diligence through his territories. The knave of a waiter (I found) had cheated me; and that from Chambery there was only one place in the interior and one in the *coupé*, which turned out to be a cabriolet, a place in front with a leathern apron and curtains, which in winter time, and in travelling over snowy mountains and through icy valleys, was not a situation "devoutly to be wished." I had no other resource, however, having paid my four pounds in advance at the over-pressing in-

stances of the *Garçon*, but to call him a *coquin*, (which being a Milanese was not quite safe) to throw out broad hints (*à l'Anglais*) of a collusion between him and the Office, and to arrange as well as I could with the *Conducteur*, that I and my fellow-traveller should not be separated. I would advise all English people travelling abroad to take their own places at coach-offices, and not to trust to waiters, who will make a point of tricking them, both as a principle and pastime; and further to procure letters of recommendation (in case of disagreeable accidents on the road) for it was a knowledge of this kind, namely, that I had a letter of introduction to one of the Professors of the College at Lyons, that procured me even the trifling concession above-mentioned, through the influence which the landlady of the Hotel had with the *Conducteur*: otherwise, instead of being stuck in the cabriolet, I might have mounted on the imperial, and any signs of vexation or impatience I might have exhibited, would have been construed into ebullitions of the national character, and a want of *bienseance* in Monsieur l'Anglois. The French, and foreigners in general, (as far as I have seen) are civil, polite, easy-tempered, obliging; but the art of keeping up plausible appearances stands them in lieu of downright honesty. They think they have a right to cheat you if they can (a compliment, a civil bow, a shrug, is worth the money!) and the instant you find out the imposition or begin to complain, they turn away from

you as a disagreeable or wrong-headed person, and you can get no redress but by main force. It is not the original transgressor, but he who declares he is aggrieved, that is considered as guilty of a breach of good manners, and a disturber of the social compact. I think one is more irritated at the frequent impositions that are practised on one abroad, because the novelty of the scene, one's ignorance of the ways of the world, and the momentary excitement of the spirits and of the flush of hope, have a tendency to renew in one's mind the unsuspecting simplicity and credulity of youth; and the petty tricks and shuffling behaviour we meet with on the road are a greater baulk to our warm, sanguine, buoyant, travelling impulses.

Annoyed at the unfair way in which we had been treated, and at the idea of being left to the mercy of the *Conducteur*, whose "honest, sonsie, bawsont face" had, however, no more of the fox in it than implied an eye to his own interest, and might be turned to our own advantage, we took our seats numerically in the Royal Diligence of Italy, at seven in the evening (January 20) and for some time suffered the extreme penalties of a French stage-coach—not indeed "the icy fang and season's difference," but a very purgatory of heat, closeness, confinement, and bad smells. Nothing can surpass it but the section of a slave-ship, or the Black-hole of Calcutta. Mr. Theodore Hook or Mr. Croker should take an airing in this way on

the Continent, in order to give them a notion of, and I should think, a distaste for the blessings of the Middle Passage. Not only were the six places in the interior all taken, and all full, but they had suspended a wicker basket (like a hen-coop) from the top of the coach, stuffed with fur-caps, hats, overalls, and different parcels, so as to make it impossible to move one way or other, and to stop every remaining breath of air. *A negociant* at my right-hand corner, who was inclined to piece out a lengthened recital with a *parce que* and a *de sorte que* at every word, having got upon ticklish ground, without seeing his audience, was cut short in the flower of his oratory, by asserting that Barcelona and St. Sebastian's in Spain were contiguous to each other. "They were at opposite sides of the country," exclaimed in the same breath a French soldier and a Spaniard, who sat on the other side of the coach, and whom he was regaling with the gallant adventures of a friend of his in the Peninsula; and not finding the usual excuse—"*C'est égal*"—applicable to a blunder in geography, was contented to fall into the rear of the discourse for the rest of the journey. At midnight we found that we had gone only nine miles in five hours, as we had been climbing a gradual ascent from the time we set out, which was our first essay in mountain-scenery, and gave us some idea of the scale of the country we were beginning to traverse. The heat became less insupportable as the noise and darkness subsided; and as

the morning dawned, we were anxious to remove that veil of uncertainty and prejudice which the obscurity of night throws over a number of passengers whom accident has huddled together in a stage-coach. I think one seldom finds one's-self set down in a party of this kind without a strong feeling of repugnance and distaste, and one seldom quits it at last without some degree of regret. It was the case in the present instance. At day-break, the pleasant farms, the thatched cottages, and sloping valleys of Savoy attracted our notice, and I was struck with the resemblance to England (to some parts of Devonshire and Somersethire in particular) a discovery which I imparted to my fellow-travellers with a more lively enthusiasm than it was received. An Englishman thinks he has only to communicate his feelings to others to meet with sympathy, and is not a little disconcerted if (after this amazing act of condescension) he is at all repulsed. How should we laugh at a Frenchman who expected us to be delighted with his finding out a likeness of some part of England to France? We English are a nation of egotists, say what we will; and so much so, that we expect others to swallow the bait of our self-love.

At Pont Beau-Voisin, the frontier town of the King of Sardinia's dominions, we stopped to breakfast, and to have our passports and luggage examined at the Barrier and Custom-house. I breakfasted with the Spaniard, who invited himself to our tea-party,

and complimented Madame (in broken English) on the excellence of her performance. We agreed between ourselves that the Spaniards and English were very much superior to the French. I found he had a taste for the Fine Arts, and I spoke of Murillo and Velasquez as two excellent Spanish painters. "Here was sympathy." I also spoke of Don Quixote—"Here was more sympathy." What a thing it is to have produced a work that makes friends of all the world that have read it, and that all the world have read! Mention but Don Quixote, and who is there that does not own him for a friend, countryman, and brother? There is no French work, at the name of which (as at a talisman) the scales of national prejudice so completely fall of; nay more, I must confess there is no English one. We were summoned from our tea and patriotic effusions to attend the *Douane*. It was striking to have to pass and repass the piquets of soldiers stationed as a guard on bridges across narrow mountain-streams that a child might leap over. After some slight dalliance with our great-coat pockets, and significant gestures as if we might or might not have things of value about us that we should not, we proceeded to the Custom-house. I had two trunks. One contained books. When it was unlocked, it was as if the lid of Pandora's box flew open. There could not have been a more sudden start or expression of surprise, had it been filled with cartridge-paper or gunpowder. Books were the corrosive sublimate that

eat out despotism and priestcraft—the artillery that battered down castle and dungeon-walls—the ferrets that ferreted out abuses—the lynx-eyed guardians that tore off disguises—the scales that weighed right and wrong—the thumping make-weight thrown into the balance that made force and fraud, the sword and the cowl, kick the beam—the dread of knaves, the scoff of fools—the balm and the consolation of the human mind—the salt of the earth—the future rulers of the world! A box full of them was a contempt of the constituted Authorities; and the names of mine were taken down with great care and secrecy—Lord Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," Milton's "Paradise Lost," De Stutt-Tracey's "Ideologie," (which Bonaparte said ruined his Russian expedition,) Mignet's "French Revolution," (which wants a chapter on the English Government,) "Sayings and Doings," with pencil notes in the margin, "Irving's Orations," the same, an "Edinburgh Review," some "Morning Chronicles," "The Literary Examiner," a collection of Poetry, a Volume bound in crimson velvet, and the Paris edition of "Table-talk." Here was some questionable matter enough—but no notice was taken. My box was afterwards corded and *leaded* with equal gravity and politeness, and it was not till I arrived at Turin that I found it was a prisoner of state, and would be forwarded to me anywhere I chose to mention, out of his Sardinian Majesty's dominions. I was startled to find myself within the smooth polished

grasp of legitimate power, without suspecting it; and was glad to recover my trunk at Florence, with no other inconvenience than the expense of its carriage across the country*.

* At Milan, a short time ago, a gentleman had a Homer, in Greek and Latin, among his books. He was surlily asked to explain what it meant. Upon doing so, the Inspector shook his head doubtingly, and said, "It might pass this time," but advised him to beware of a second. "Here, now, is a work," he continued, pointing to ——'s Lives of the Popes, containing all the abominations (public and private) of their history, "You should bring such books as this with you!" This is one specimen of that learned conspiracy for the suppression of light and letters, of which we are sleeping partners and honorary associates. The Allies complain at present of Mr. Canning's "faithlessness." Oh! that he would indeed play them false and earn his title of "slippery George!" Faithful to anything he cannot be—faithless to them would be something. The Austrians, it is said, have lately attempted to strike the name of Italy out of the maps, that that country may neither have a name, a body, or a soul left to it, and even to suppress the publication of its finest historians, that it may forget it ever had one. Go on, obliging creatures! Blot the light out of heaven, tarnish the blue sky with the blight and fog of despotism, deface and trample on the green earth; for while one trace of what is fair or lovely is left in the earth under our feet, or the sky over our heads, or in the mind of man that is within us, it will remain to mock your impotence and deformity, and to reflect back lasting hatred and contempt upon you. Why does not our Eton scholar, our classic Statesman, suggest to the Allies an intelligible hint of the propriety of inscribing the name of Italy once more on the map,

"Like that ensanguined flower inscribed with woe"—

It was noon as we returned to the inn, and we first caught a full view of the Alps over a plashy meadow, some feathery trees, and the tops of the houses of the village in which we were. It was a magnificent sight, and in truth a new sensation. Their summits were bright with snow and with the mid-day sun; they did not seem to stand upon the earth, but to prop the sky; they were at a considerable distance from us, and yet appeared just over our heads. The surprise seemed to take away our breath, and to lift us from our feet. It was drinking the empyrean. As we could

of taking off the prohibition on the Histories of Guicciardini and Davila? Or why do not the English people—the English House of Commons, suggest it to him? Is there such a thing as the English people—as an English House of Commons? Their influence is not felt at present in Europe, as erst it was, to its short-lived hope, bought with flat despair. The reason is, the cause of the people of Europe has no echo in the breasts of the British public. The cause of Kings had an echo in the breast of a British Monarch—that of Foreign Governments in the breasts of British Ministers! There are at present no fewer than fifteen hundred of the Italian nobility of the first families proscribed from their country, or pining in dungeons. For what? For trying to give to their country independence and a Constitutional Government, like England! What says the English House of Lords to that? What if the Russians were to come and apply to us and to them the benefits and the principles of the Holy Alliance—the bayonet and the thumb-screw? Lord Bathurst says, "let them come;"—and they will come when we have a servile people, dead to liberty, and an arbitrary government, hating and ready to betray it!

not long retain possession of our two places in the interior, I proposed to our guide to exchange them for the cabriolet; and, after some little chaffering and candid representations of the outside passengers of the cold we should have to encounter, we were installed there to our great satisfaction, and the no less contentment of those whom we succeeded. Indeed I had no idea that we should be steeped in these icy valleys at three o'clock in the morning, or I might have hesitated. The view was cheering, the clear air refreshing, and I thought we should set off each morning about seven or eight. But it is part of the *sçavoir vivre* in France, and one of the methods of adding to the *agrémens* of travelling, to set out three hours before daybreak in the depth of winter, and stop two hours about noon, in order to arrive early in the evening. With all the disadvantages of preposterous hours and of intense cold pouring into the cabriolet like water the two first mornings, I cannot say I repented of my bargain. We had come a thousand miles to see the Alps for one thing, and we *did* see them in perfection, which we could not have done inside. The ascent for some way was striking and full of novelty; but on turning a corner of the road we entered upon a narrow defile or rocky ledge, overlooking a steep valley under our feet, with a headlong turbid stream dashing down it, and spreading itself out into a more tranquil river below, a dark wood of innumerable pine-trees covering the side of the valley opposite, with

broken crags, morasses, and green plots of cultivated ground, orchards, and quiet homesteads, on which the sun glanced its farewell rays through the openings of the mountains. On our left, a precipice of dark brown rocks of various shapes rose abruptly at our side, or hung threatening over the road, into which some of their huge fragments, loosened by the winter's flaw, had fallen, and which men and mules were employed in removing—(the thundering crash had hardly yet subsided, as you looked up and saw the fleecy clouds sailing among the shattered cliffs, while another giant-mass seemed ready to quit its station in the sky) —and as the road wound along to the other extremity of this noble pass, between the beetling rocks and dark sloping pine-forests, frowning defiance at each other, you caught the azure sky, the snowy ridges of the mountains, and the peaked tops of the Grand Chartreuse, waving to the right in solitary state and air-clad brightness.—It was a scene dazzling, enchanting, and that stamped the long-cherished dreams of the imagination upon the senses. Between those four crystal peaks stood the ancient monastery of that name, hid from the sight, revealed to thought, halfway between earth and heaven, enshrined in its cerulean atmosphere, lifting the soul to its native home, and purifying it from mortal grossness. I cannot wonder at the pilgrimages that are made to it, its calm repose, its vows monastic. Life must there seem a noiseless dream;—Death a near translation to the

skies! Winter was even an advantage to this scene. The black forests, the dark sides of the rocks gave additional and inconceivable brightness to the glittering summits of the lofty mountains, and received a deeper tone and a more solemn gloom from them; while in the open spaces the unvaried sheets of snow fatigue the eye, which requires the contrast of the green tints or luxuriant foliage of summer or of spring. This was more particularly perceptible as the day closed, when the golden sunset streamed in vain over frozen valleys that imbibed no richness from it, and repelled its smile from their polished marble surface. But in the more gloomy and desert regions, the difference is less remarkable between summer and winter, except in the beginning of spring, when the summits of the hoary rocks are covered with snow, and the cleft in their sides are filled with fragrant shrubs and flowers. I hope to see this miracle when I return.

We came to Echelles, where we changed horses with great formality and preparation, as if setting out on some formidable expedition. Six large strong-boned horses with high haunches (used to ascend and descend mountains) were put to, the rope-tackle was examined and repaired, and our two postilions mounted and dismounted more than once, before they seemed willing to set off, which they did at last at a hand-gallop, that was continued for some miles. It is nothing to see English blood-horses get over the ground with such prodigious fleetness and spirit, but

it is really curious to see the huge cart-horses, that they use for Diligences abroad, lumbering along and making the miles disappear behind them with their ponderous strength and persevering activity. The road for some way rattled under their heavy hoofs, and the heavy wheels that they dragged or whirled along at a thundering pace; the postilions cracked their whips, and the one in front (a dark, swarthy, short-set fellow) flourished his, shouted and hallooed, and turned back to vociferate his instructions to his companion with the robust energy and wildness of expression of a smuggler or a leader of banditti, carrying off a rich booty from a troop of soldiers. There was something in the scenery to favour this idea. Night was falling as we entered the superb tunnel cut through the mountain at La Grotte (a work attributed to Victor-Emanuel, with the same truth that Falstaff took to himself the merit of the death of Hotspur), and its iron floor rang, the whips cracked, and the roof echoed to the clear voice of our intrepid postilion as we dashed through it. Our path then wound among romantic defiles, where huge masses of snow and the gathering gloom threatened continually to bar our way; but it seemed cleared by the lively shout of our guide, and the carriage-wheels, clogged with ice, rolled after the heavy tramp of the horses. In this manner we rode on through a country full of wild grandeur and shadowy fears, till we had nearly reached the end of our day's journey, when we dismissed our two fore-

horses and their rider, to whom I presented a trifling *douceur* "for the sake of his good voice and cheerful countenance." The descent into Chambery was the most dangerous part of the road, and our horses were nearly thrown on their haunches several times. The road was narrow and slippery; there were a number of market-carts returning from the town, and there was a declivity on one side, which, though not a precipice, was quite sufficient to have dashed us to pieces in a common-place way. We arrived at Chambery in the dusk of the evening; and there is surely a charm in the name, and in that of the Charmettes near it (where he who relished all more sharply than his fellows, and made them feel for him as for themselves, alone felt peace or hope), which even the Magdalen Muse of Mr. Moore has not been able to *unsing!* We alighted at the inn fatigued enough, and were delighted on being shewn to a room to find the floor of wood, and English teacups and saucers. We were in Savoy.

We set out early the next morning, and it was the most trying part of our whole journey. The wind cut like a scythe through the valleys, and a cold, icy feeling struck from the sides of the snowy precipices that surrounded us, so that we seemed enclosed in a huge well of mountains. We got to St. Jean de Maurienne to breakfast about noon, where the only point agreed upon appeared to be to have nothing ready to receive us. This was the most tedious day of all; nor

did we meet with any thing to repay us for our uncomfortable setting out. We travelled through a scene of desolation, were chilled in sunless valleys or dazzled by sunny mountain-tops, passed frozen streams or gloomy cavities, that might be transformed into the scene of some Gothic wizard's spell, or reminded one of some German novel. Let no one imagine that the crossing the Alps is the work of a moment, or done by a single heroic effort—that they are a huge but detached chain of hills, or like the dotted line we find in the map. They are a sea or an entire kingdom of mountains. It took us three days to traverse them in this, which is the most practicable direction, and travelling at a good round pace. We passed on as far as eye could see, and still we appeared to have made little way. Still we were in the shadow of the same enormous mass of rock and snow, by the side of the same creeping stream. Lofty mountains reared themselves in front of us—horrid abysses were scooped out under our feet. Sometimes the road wound along the side of a steep hill, overlooking some village-spire or hamlet, and as we ascended it, it only gave us a view of remoter scenes, "where Alps o'er Alps arise," tossing about their billowy tops, and tumbling their unwieldy shapes in all directions—a world of wonders!—Any one, who is much of an egotist, ought not to travel through these districts; his vanity will not find its account in them; it will be chilled, mortified, shrunk up: but they are a noble treat to those who feel themselves raised in

their own thoughts and in the scale of being by the immensity of other things, and who can aggrandise and piece out their personal insignificance by the grandeur and eternal forms of nature! It gives one a vast idea of Buonaparte to think of him in these situations. He alone (the Rob Roy of the scene) seemed a match for the elements, and able to master "this fortress, built by nature for herself." Neither impeded nor turned aside by immoveable barriers, he smote the mountains with his iron glaive, and made them malleable; cut roads through them; transported armies over their ridgy steeps; and the rocks "nodded to him, and did him courtesies!"

We arrived at St. Michelle at night-fall (after passing through beds of ice and the infernal regions of cold), where we met with a truly hospitable reception, with wood-floors in the English fashion, and where they told us the King of England had stopped. This made no sort of difference to me.

We breakfasted the next day (being Sunday) at Lans-le-Bourg, where I observed my friend the Spaniard busy with his tables, taking down the name of the place. The landlady was a little, round, fat, good-humoured, black-eyed Italian or Savoyard, *saying* a number of good things to all her guests, but sparing of them otherwise. We were now at the foot of Mount Cenis, and after breakfast we set off on foot before the Diligence, which was to follow us in half an hour. We passed a melancholy-looking inn at the

end of the town, professing to be kept by an English-woman; but there appeared to be nobody about the house, English, French, or Italian. The mistress of it (a young woman who had married an Italian) had, in fact, died a short time before of pure chagrin and disappointment in this solitary place, after having told her tale of distress to every one, till it fairly wore her out. We had leisure to look back to the town as we proceeded, and which, with its church, stone-cottages, and slated roofs, shrunk into a miniature-model of itself as we continued to advance farther and higher above it. Some straggling cottages, some vineyards planted at a great height, and another compact and well-built village, that seemed to defy the extremity of the seasons, were seen in the direction of the valley that we were pursuing. Else all around were shapeless, sightless piles of hills covered with snow, with crags or pine-trees or a foot-path peeping out, and in the appearance of which no alteration whatever was made by our advancing or receding. We gained on the mountain by a broad, winding road that continually doubles, and looks down upon the point from whence you started half an hour before. Some snow had fallen in the morning, but it was now fine, though cloudy. We found two of our fellow-travellers following our example, and they soon after overtook us. They were both French. We noticed some of the features of the scenery; and a lofty hill opposite to us being scooped out into a bed of snow, with

two ridges or promontories projecting (something like an arm-chair) on each side. "*Voilà!*" said the younger and more volatile of our companions, "*c'est un trône, et le nuage est la gloire!*"—A white cloud indeed encircled its misty top. I complimented him on the happiness of his allusion, and said that Madame was pleased with the exactness of the resemblance. He then turned to the valley, and said, "*C'est un berceau.*" This is the height to which the imagination of a Frenchman always soars, and it can soar no higher. Any thing that is not cast in this obvious, common-place mould, that had been used a thousand times before with applause, they think barbarous, and as they phrase it, *originaire*. No farther notice was taken of the scenery, any more than if we had been walking on the Boulevards at Paris, and my young Frenchman talked of other things, laughed, sung, and smoked a cigar with a gaiety and lightness of heart that I envied. "What has become," said the elder of the Frenchmen, "of Monsieur l'Espagnol? He does not easily quit his seat; he sits in one corner, never looks out, or if you point to any object, takes no notice of it; and when you come to the end of the stage, says—'What is the name of that place we passed by last?'—takes out his pocket-book, and makes a note of it. 'That is droll.'" And what made it more so, it turned out that our Spanish friend was a painter, travelling to Rome to study the Fine Arts! All the way as we ascended, there were red

posts placed at the edge of the road, ten or twelve feet in height, to point out the direction of the road in case of a heavy fall of snow, and with notches cut to shew the depth of the drifts. There were also scattered stone-hovels, erected as stations for the *Gens d'armes*, who were sometimes left here for several days together after a severe snow-storm, without being approached by a single human being. One of these stood near the top of the mountain, and as we were tired of the walk (which had occupied two hours) and of the uniformity of the view, we agreed to wait here for the Diligence to overtake us. We were cordially welcomed in by a young peasant (a soldier's wife) with a complexion as fresh as the winds, and an expression as pure as the mountain-snows. The floor of this rude tenement consisted of the solid rock; and a three-legged table stood on it, on which were placed three earthen bowls filled with sparkling wine, heated on a stove with sugar. The woman stood by, and did the honours of this cheerful repast with a rustic simplicity and a pastoral grace that might have called forth the powers of Hemskirk and Raphael. I shall not soon forget the rich ruby colour of the wine, as the sun shone upon it through a low glazed window that looked out on the boundless wastes around, nor its grateful spicy smell as we sat round it. I was complaining of the trick that had been played by the waiter at Lyons in the taking of our places, when I was told by the young Frenchman, that, in case I re-

turned to Lyons, I ought to go to the Hotel de l'Europe, or to the Hotel du Nord, "in which latter case he should have the honour of serving me." I thanked him for his information, and we set out to finish the ascent of Mount Cenis, which we did in another half-hour's march. The *traiteur* of the Hotel du Nord and I had got into a brisk theatrical discussion on the comparative merits of Kean and Talma, he asserting that there was something in French acting which an English understanding could not appreciate; and I insisting loudly on bursts of passion as the *forte* of Talma, which was a language common to human nature; that in his *Œdipus*, for instance, it was not a Frenchman or an Englishman he had to represent—"*Mais c'est un homme, c'est Œdipe*"—when our cautious Spaniard brushed by us, determined to shew he could descend the mountain, if he would not ascend it on foot. His figure was characteristic enough, his motions smart and lively, and his dress composed of all the colours of the rainbow. He strutted on before us in the snow, like a flamingo or some tropical bird of variegated plumage; his dark purple cloak fluttered in the air, his Montero cap, set a little on one side, was of fawn colour; his waistcoat a bright scarlet, his coat a reddish brown, his trowsers a pea-green, and his boots a perfect yellow. He saluted us with a national politeness as he passed, and seemed bent on redeeming the sedentary sluggishness of his character by one bold and desperate effort of locomotion.

The coach shortly after overtook us. We descended a long and steep declivity, with the highest point of Mount Cenis on our left, and a lake to the right, like a landing-place for geese. Between the two was a low, white monastery, and the barrier where we had our passports inspected, and then went forward with only two stout horses and one rider. The snow on this side of the mountain was nearly gone. I supposed myself for some time nearly on level ground, till we came in view of several black chasms or steep ravines in the side of the mountain facing us, with water oozing from it, and saw through some *galleries*, that is, massy stone-pillars knit together by thick rails of strong timber, guarding the road-side, a perpendicular precipice below, and other galleries beyond, diminished in a fairy perspective, and descending "with cautious haste and giddy cunning," and with innumerable windings and re-duplications to an interminable depth and distance from the height where we were. The men and horses with carts, that were labouring up the path in the hollow below, shewed like crows or flies. The road we had to pass was often immediately under that we were passing, and cut from the side of what was all but a precipice out of the solid rock by the broad, firm master-hand that traced and executed this mighty work. The share that art has in the scene is as appalling as the scene itself—the strong securitp against danger as sublime as the danger itself. Near the turning of one of the first galleries is a beautiful

waterfall, which at this time was frozen into a sheet of green pendant ice—a magical transformation. Long after we continued to descend, now faster and now slower, and came at length to a small village at the bottom of a sweeping line of road, where the houses seemed like dove-cotes with the mountain's back reared like a wall behind them, and which I thought the termination of our journey. But here the wonder and the greatness began: for, advancing through a grove of slender trees to another point of the road, we caught a new view of the lofty mountain to our left. It stood in front of us, with itshead in the skies, covered with snow, and its bare sides stretching far away into a valley that yawned at its feet, and over which we seemed suspended in mid air. The height, the magnitude, the immoveableness of the objects, the wild contrast, the deep tones, the dance and play of the landscape from the change of our direction and the interposition of other striking objects, the continued recurrence of the same huge masses, like giants following us with unseen strides, stunned the sense like a blow, and yet gave the imagination strength to contend with a force that mocked it. Here immeasurable columns of reddish granite shelved from the mountain's sides; here they were covered and stained with furze and other shrubs; here a chalky cliff shewed a fir-grove climbing its tall sides, and that itself looked at a distance like a huge, branching pine-tree; beyond was a dark, projecting knoll, or

hilly promontory, that threatened to bound the perspective—but, on drawing nearer to it, the cloudy vapour that shrouded it (as it were) retired, and opened another vista beyond, that, in its own unfathomed depth, and in the gradual obscurity of twilight, resembled the uncertain gloom of the back-ground of some fine picture. At the bottom of this valley crept a sluggish stream, and a monastery or low castle stood upon its banks. The effect was altogether grander than I had any conception of. It was not the idea of height or elevation that was obtruded upon the mind and staggered it, but we seemed to be descending into the bowels of the earth—its foundations seemed to be laid bare to the centre; and abyss after abyss, a vast, shadowy, interminable space, opened to receive us. We saw the building up and frame-work of the world—its limbs, its ponderous masses, and mighty proportions, raised stage upon stage, and we might be said to have passed into an unknown sphere, and beyond mortal limits. As we rode down our winding, circuitous path, our baggage, (which had been taken off) moved on before us; a grey horse that had got loose from the stable followed it, and as we whirled round the different turnings in this rapid, mechanical flight, at the same rate and the same distance from each other, there seemed something like witchcraft in the scene and in our progress through it. The moon had risen, and threw its gleams across the fading twilight; the snowy tops of the

mountains were blended with the clouds and stars; their sides were shrouded in mysterious gloom, and it was not till we entered Susa, with its fine old drawbridge and castellated walls, that we found ourselves on *terra firma*, or breathed common air again. At the inn at Susa, we first perceived the difference of Italian manners; and the next day arrived at Turin, after passing over thirty miles of the straightest, flattest, and dullest road in the world. Here we stopped two days to recruit our strength and look about us.

CHAPTER XV.

My arrival at Turin was the first and only moment of intoxication I have found in Italy. It is a city of palaces. After a change of dress (which, at the end of a long journey, is a great luxury) I walked out, and traversing several clean, spacious streets, came to a promenade outside the town, from which I saw the chain of Alps we had left behind us, rising like a range of marble pillars in the evening sky. Monte Viso and Mount Cenis resembled two pointed cones of ice, shooting up above all the rest. I could distinguish the broad and rapid Po, winding along at the other extremity of the walk, through vineyards and meadow grounds. The trees had on that deep sad foliage, which takes a mellower tinge from being prolonged into the midst of winter, and which I had only seen in pictures. A Monk was walking in a solitary grove at a little distance from the common path. The air was soft and balmy, and I felt transported to another climate—another earth—another sky. The winter was suddenly changed to spring. It was as if I had to begin my life anew. Several young Italian women were walking on the terrace, in English dresses, and with graceful downcast looks, in which

you might fancy that you read the soul of the Decameron. It was a fine, serious grace, equally remote from French levity and English sullenness, but it was the last I saw of it. I have run the gauntlet of vulgar shapes and horrid faces ever since. The women in Italy (so far as I have seen hitherto) are detestably ugly. They are not even dark and swarthy, but a mixture of brown and red, coarse, marked with the small pox, with pug-features, awkward, ill-made, fierce, dirty, lazy, neither attempting nor hoping to please. Italian beauty (if there is, as I am credibly informed, such a thing) is retired, conventual, denied to the common gaze. It was and it remains a dream to me, a vision of the brain! I returned to the inn (the *Pension Suisse*) in high spirits, and made a most luxuriant dinner. We had a wild duck equal to what we had in Paris, and the grapes were the finest I ever tasted. Afterwards we went to the Opera, and saw a *ballet of action* (out-heroding Herod) with all the extravagance of incessant dumb-show and noise, the glittering of armour, the burning of castles, the clattering of horses on and off the stage, and heroines like furies in hysterics. Nothing at Bartholomew Fair was ever in worse taste, noisier, or finer. It was as if a whole people had buried their understandings, their imaginations, and their hearts in their senses; and as if the latter were so jaded and worn out, that they required to be inflamed, dazzled, and urged almost to a kind of frenzy-fever, to feel any thing.

The house was crowded to excess, and dark, all but the stage, which shed a dim, ghastly light on the gilt boxes and the audience. Milton might easily have taken his idea of Pandemonium from the inside of an Italian Theatre, its heat, its gorgeousness, and its gloom. We were at the back of the pit, in which there was only standing room, and leaned against the first row of boxes, full of the Piedmontese Nobility, who talked fast and loud in their harsh guttural dialect, in spite of the repeated admonitions of "a gentle usher, Authority by name," who every five seconds hissed some lady of quality and high breeding whose voice was heard with an *eclat* above all the rest. No notice whatever was taken of the acting or the singing (which was any thing but Italian, unless Italian at present means a bad imitation of the French) till a comic dance attracted all eyes, and drew forth bursts of enthusiastic approbation. I do not know the performers' names, but a short, squat fellow (a kind of *pollard* of the green-room) dressed in a brown linsey-woolsey doublet and hose, with round head, round shoulders, short arms and short legs, made love to a fine *die-away* lady, dressed up in the hoops, lappets and furbelows of the last age, and stumped, nodded, pulled and tugged at his mistress with laudable perseverance, and in determined opposition to the awkward, mawkish graces of an Adonis of a rival, with flowing locks, pink ribbons, yellow kerseymere breeches, and an insipid expression of the utmost

distress. It was an admirable grotesque and fantastic piece of pantomime humour. The little fellow who played the Clown, certainly entered into the part with infinite adroitness and spirit. He merited the *teres et rotundus* of the poet. He bounded over the stage like a foot-ball, rolled himself up like a hedge-hog, stuck his arms in his sides like fins, rolled his eyes in his head like bullets—and the involuntary plaudits of the audience witnessed the success of his efforts at once to electrify and *stultify* them! The only annoyance I found at Turin was the number of beggars who are stuck against the walls like fixtures, and expose their diseased, distorted limbs, with no more remorse or feeling than if they did not belong to them, deafening you with one wearisome cry the whole day long.

We were fortunate enough to find a voiture going from Geneva to Florence, with an English lady and her niece—I bargained for the two remaining places for ten guineas, and the journey turned out pleasantly, I believe, to all parties; I am sure it did so to us. We were to be eight days on the road, and to stop two days to rest, once at Parma, and once at Bologna, to see the pictures. Having made this arrangement, I was proceeding over the bridge towards the Observatory that commands a view of the town and the whole surrounding country, and had quite forgotten that I had such a thing as a passport to take with me. I found, however, I had no fewer than four signatures to procure, besides the six that were already

tacked to my passport, before I could proceed, and which I had some difficulty in obtaining in time to set out on the following morning. The hurry I was thrown into by this circumstance prevented me from seeing some fine Rembrandts, Spagnolettos and Caraccis, which I was told are to be found in the Palace of Prince Carignani and elsewhere. I received this piece of information from my friend the Spaniard, who called on me to inquire my proposed route, and to "testify," as he said, "his respect for the English character." Shall I own it? I who flout, rail at, and contemn the English, was more pleased with this compliment paid to me in my national character, than with any I ever received on the score of personal civility. My fellow-traveller was for Genoa and Milan; I for Florence: but we were to meet at Rome.

The next morning was clear and frosty, and the sun shone bright into the windows of the voiture, as we left Turin, and proceeded for some miles at a gentle pace along the banks of the Po. The road was level and excellent, and we met a number of market people with mules and yokes of oxen. There were some hills crowned with villas; some bits of traditional Italian scenery now and then; but in general you would not know but that you were in England, except from the greater clearness and lightness of the air. We breakfasted at the first town we came to, in two separate English groups, and I could not help being struck with the manner of our reception at an Italian

inn, which had an air of indifference, insolence, and hollow swaggering about it, as much as to say, "Well, what do you think of us Italians? Whatever you think, we care very little about the matter!" The French are a politer people than the Italians—the English are honester; but I may as well postpone these comparisons till my return. The room smoked, and the waiter insisted on having the windows and the door open, in spite of my remonstrances to the contrary. He flung in and out of the room as if he had a great opinion of himself, and wished to express it by a *braggadocio* air. The partridges, coffee, cheese, and grapes, on which we breakfasted *à la fourchette*, were, however, excellent. I said so, but the acknowledgment seemed to be considered as superfluous by our attendant, who received five francs for his master, and one for himself, with an air of condescending patronage. In consequence of something being said about our passports, he relaxed in the solemnity of his deportment, and observed that "he had been once near being engaged as valet to an English gentleman, at Ostend; that he had but three hours to procure his passport, but while he was getting it, the ship sailed, and he lost his situation." Such was my first impression of Italian inns and waiters, and I have seen nothing since materially to alter it. They receive you with a mixture of familiarity and fierceness, and instead of expecting any great civility from them, they excite that sort of uncomfortable sensation as to

the footing you are upon, that you are glad to get away without meeting with some affront. There is either a fawning sleekness, which looks like design, or an insolence, which looks as if they had you in their power. In Switzerland and Savoy you are waited on by women; in Italy by men. I cannot say I like the exchange. From Turin to Florence, only one girl entered the room, and she (not to mend the matter) was a very pretty one.—I was told at the office of Messrs. Bonnafoux at Turin, that travelling to Rome by a vetturino was highly dangerous, and that their Diligence was guarded by four carabineers, to defend it from the banditti. I saw none, nor the appearance of any thing that looked like a robber, except a bare-foot friar, who suddenly sprang out of a hedge by the road-side, with a somewhat wild and haggard appearance, which a little startled me. Instead of finding a thief concealed behind each bush, or a Salvator Rosa face scowling from a ruined hovel, or peeping from a jutting crag at every turn, there is an excellent turnpike-road all the way, three-fourths perfectly level, skirted with hedges, corn-fields, orchards and vineyards, populous with hamlets and villages, with labourers at work in the fields, and with crowds of peasants in gay, picturesque attire, and with healthy, cheerful, open, but manly countenances, passing along, either to or from the different market-towns. It was Carnival time; and as we travelled on, we were struck with the variety of rich dresses,

red, yellow, and green, the high-plaited head-dresses of the women, some in the shape of helmets, with pins stuck in them like skewers, with gold crosses at their bosoms, and large muffs on their hands, who poured from the principal towns along the high-road, or turned off towards some village-spire in the distance, chequering the landscape with their gaily-tinted groups. They often turned back and laughed as we drove by them, or passed thoughtfully on without noticing us, but assuredly showed no signs of an intention to rob or murder us. Even in the Apennines, though the road is rugged and desolate, it is lined with farm-houses and towns at small distances; and there is but one house all the way that is stained by the recollection of a tragic catastrophe. How it may be farther south, I cannot say; but so far, the reports to alarm strangers are (to the best of my observation and conjecture) totally unfounded.

We had left the Alps behind us, the white tops of which we still saw scarcely distinguishable from ridges of rolling clouds, and that seemed to follow us like a formidable enemy, and almost enclose us in a semi-circle; and we had the Apennines in front, that, gradually emerging from the horizon, opposed their undulating barrier to our future progress, with shadowy shapes of danger and Covigliaijo lurking in the midst of them. All the space between these two, for at least 150 miles (I should suppose) is one level cultivated plain, one continuous garden. This

became more remarkably the case, as we entered the territories of Maria-Louisa (the little States of Parma and Placentia) when, for two whole days, we literally travelled through an uninterrupted succession of corn-fields, vineyards and orchards, all in the highest state of cultivation, with the hedges neatly clipped into a kind of trellis-work, and the vines hanging in festoons from tree to tree, or clinging "with marriageable arms" round the branches of each regularly planted and friendly support. It was more like passing through a number of orchard-plots or garden-grounds in the neighbourhood of some great city (such as London) than making a journey through a wide and extensive tract of country. Not a common came in sight, nor a single foot of waste or indifferent ground. It became tedious at last from the richness, the neatness, and the uniformity; for the whole was worked up to an ideal model, and so exactly a counterpart of itself, that it was like looking out of a window at the same identical spot, instead of passing on to new objects every instant. We were saturated even with beauty and comfort, and were disposed to repeat the wish—

"To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new."

A white square villa, or better sort of farm-house, sometimes stared on us from the end of a long, strait avenue of poplars, standing in ostentatious, unadorned nakedness, and in a stiff, meagre, and very singular taste. What is the cause of the predilection

of the Italians for straight lines and unsheltered walls? Is it for the sake of security or vanity? The desire of seeing everything or of being seen by every one? The only thing that broke the uniformity of the scene, or gave an appearance of wretchedness or neglect to the country, was the number of dry beds of the torrents of melted snow and ice that came down from the mountains in the breaking up of the winter, and that stretched their wide, comfortless, unprofitable length across these valleys in their progress to the Adriatic. Some of them were half a mile in breadth, and had stately bridges over them, with innumerable arches—(the work, it seems, of Maria Louisa) some of which we crossed over, others we rode under. We approached the first of them by moonlight, and the effect of the long, white, glimmering, sepulchral arches was as ghastly then as it is dreary in the day-time. There is something almost preternatural in the sensation they excite, particularly when your nerves have been agitated and harassed during several days' journey, and you are disposed to startle at everything in a questionable shape. You do not know what to make of them. They seem like the skeletons of bridges over the dry bones and dusty relics of rivers. It is as if some mighty concussion of the earth had swept away the water, and left the bridge standing in stiffened horror over it. It is a new species of desolation, as flat, dull, disheartening, and hopeless as can be imagined. Mr. Crabbe should travel post to Italy on

purpose to describe it, and to add it to his list of prosaic horrors. While here, he might also try his hand upon an Italian vintage, and if he does not squeeze the juice and spirit out of it, and leave nothing but the husk and stalks, I am much mistaken. As we groped our way under the stony ribs of the first of these structures that we came to, one of the arches within which the moonlight fell, presented a momentary appearance of a woman in a white dress and hood, stooping to gather stones. I wish I had the petrific pencil of the ingenious artist above-named, that I might imbody this flitting shadow in a permanent form.

It was late on the fourth day (Saturday) before we reached Parma. Our two black, glossy, easy-going horses were tired of the sameness or length of the way; and our guide appeared to have forgotten it, for we entered the capital of the Archduchy without his being aware of it. We went to the Peacock Inn, where we were shewn into a very fine but faded apartment, and where we stopped the whole of the next day. Here, for the first time on our journey, we found a carpet, which, however, stuck to the tiled floor with dirt and age. There was a lofty bed, with a crimson silk canopy, a marble table, looking-glasses of all sizes and in every direction*, and excellent

* Why have they such quantities of looking-glasses in Italy, and none in Scotland? The dirt in each country is equal; the finery not. Neither in Scotland do they call in the aid of the

coffee, fruit, game, bread and wine at a moderate rate—that is to say, our supper the first night, our breakfast, dinner, and coffee the next day, and coffee the following morning, with lodging and fire, came to twenty-three francs. It would have cost more than double in England in the same circumstances. We had an exhilarating view from our window of the street and great square. It was full of noise and bustle. The people were standing in lounging attitudes by themselves, or talking loud in groups, and with great animation. The expression of character seemed to be natural and unaffected. Every one appeared to follow the bent of his own humour and feelings (good or bad) and I did not perceive any of that smirking grimace and varnish of affectation and self-complacency, which glitters in the face and manners of every Frenchman, and makes them so many enemies. If an individual is inordinately delighted with himself, do not others laugh at and take a dislike to him? Must it not be equally so with a nation enamoured of itself?—The women that I saw did

Fine Arts, of the upholsterer and tapissier, to multiply the images of the former in squalid decorations, and thus shew that the debasement is moral as well as physical. They write up on certain parts of Rome "Immondizia." A Florentine asked why it was not written on the gates of Rome? An Englishman might be tempted to ask, why it is not written on the gates of Calais, to serve for the rest of the Continent? If the people and houses in Italy are as dirty or dirtier than in France, the streets and towns are kept in infinitely better order.

not answer to my expectations. They had high shoulders, thick waists, and shambling feet, or that *crapaudeux* shape, which is odious to see or think of. The men looked better, and I saw little difference between them and the English, except a greater degree of fire and spirit. The priests had many of them (both here and at Turin) fine faces, with a jovial expression of good humour and good living, or of subtle thought and painful watching, studious to keep the good things that enriched the veins and pampered the pride of the brotherhood. Here we saw the whole market-place kneel down as the host passed by. Being Carnival time, high mass was celebrated at the principal churches, and *Moses in Egypt* was given at the Opera in the evening. The day before, as we entered Parma in the dusk, we saw a procession of flambeaux at a distance, which denoted a funeral. The processions are often joined by persons of the highest quality in disguise, who make a practice of performing penance, or expiating some offence by attending the obsequies of the dead. This custom may be ridiculed as superstitious by an excess of Protestant zeal; but the moralist will hardly blame what shews a sense of human infirmity, and owns something "serious in mortality;" and is besides freed from the suspicion of ostentation or hypocrisy. Lord Glenallan, in "The Antiquary," has been censured on the same principle, as an excrescence of morbid and superannuated superstition. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* When human

nature is no longer liable to such misfortunes, our sympathy with them will then be superfluous—we may dry up our tears, and stifle our sighs. In the mean time, they who enlarge our sympathy with others, or deepen it for ourselves from lofty, imaginary sources, are the true teachers of morality, and benefactors of mankind, were they twenty times tools and Tories. It is not the shutting up of hospitals, but the opening of the human heart, that will lead to the regeneration of the world* !

It was at Parma I first noticed the women looking out of the windows (not one or two stragglers, but two or three from every house) where they hang like signs or pictures, stretching their necks out, or confined, like children by iron bars, often with cushions to lean upon, *scaldalettos* dangling from their hands (another vile custom). This seems to shew a prodigious predominance of the *organ of sight*, or a want of something to do or to think of. In France, the passion of the women is not to see, but to talk. In Hogarth, you perceive some symptoms of the same prurience of the optic nerve, and willingness to take in knowledge at the entrance of the eyes. It certainly has a great look of ignorance, indolence, and vulgarity. In summer time, perhaps, the practice might be natural—in winter, the habit is quite unaccountable. I thought, at first, it might be one of the abuses of the Carnival; but

* See *Westminster Review.*

the Carnival is over, and the windows are still lined with eyes and heads—that do not like the trouble of putting on a cap.

We were told we could see her Majesty at mass, (so her dutiful subjects call the Archduchess) and we went to see the daughter of a sovereign, the self-devoted consort of one who only lost himself by taking upon him a degrading equality with Emperors and Kings. We had a Cicerone with us, who led us, without ceremony, to a place in the chapel, where we could command a full view of Maria Louisa, and which we made use of without much reserve. She knelt, or stood, in the middle of a small gallery, with attendants, male and female, on each side of her. We saw her distinctly for several minutes. She has full fair features, not handsome, but with a mild, unassuming expression, tinged with thoughtfulness. She appears about forty; she seemed to cast a wistful look at us, being strangers and English people—

"Methought she looked at us—
So every one believes, that sees a Duchess!"—Old Play.

There are some not very pleasant rumours circulated of her. She must have had something of the heroine of the Cid about her. She married the man who had conquered her father. She is said to have leaned on the Duke of Wellington's arm. After that, she might do whatever she pleased. Perhaps these stories are only circulated to degrade her; or, perhaps, a scheme may have been laid to degrade her in reality, by the

persons nearest to her, and most interested in, but most jealous of, her honour! We were invited to see the cradle of the little Napoleon, which I declined; and we then went to see the new gallery which the Archduchess has built for her pictures, in which there is a bust of herself, by Canova. Here I saw a number of pictures, and among others the Correggios and the celebrated St. Jerome, which I had seen at Paris. I must have been out of tune; for my disappointment and my consequent mortification were extreme. I had never thought Correggio a God; but I had attributed this to my own inexperience and want of taste, and I hoped by this time to have ripened into that full idolatry of him expressed by Mengs and others. Instead of which, his pictures (they stood on the ground without frames, and in a bad light) appeared to be comparatively mean, feeble, and affected. There is the master-hand, no doubt, but tremulous with artificial airs—beauty and grace carried to a pitch of quaintness and conceit—the expression of joy or woe, but lost in a doting contemplation of its own ecstasy or agony, and after being raised to the height of truth and nature, hurried over the brink of refinement into effeminacy, by a craving after impossibilities, and a wanton dalliance with the *ideal.* Correggio has painted the wreathed smile of sweetness, but he does not stop till he has contorted it into affectation; he has expressed the utmost distress and despondency of soul, but it is the weak-

ness of suffering without the strength. His pictures are so perfect and delicate, that "the sense aches at them;" and in his efforts after refinement, he has worked himself up into a state of languid, nervous irritability, which is reflected back upon the spectator. These remarks appeared to me applicable in their full force to the St. Jerome, the Taking down from the Cross, and the Martyrdom of St. Placide, in which there is an executioner with his back turned, in a *chiaro-scuro* of the most marvellous clearness and beauty. In all these there is a want of manly firmness and simplicity. He might be supposed to have touched, at some period of his progress, on the highest point of excellence, and then to have spoiled all by a wish to go farther, without knowing how or why. Perhaps modesty, or an ignorance of what others had done, or of what the art could do, was at the foundation of this, and prevented him from knowing where to stop. Perhaps he had too refined and tender a susceptibility, or ideas of sanctity and sweetness beyond the power of his art to express; and in the attempt to reconcile the mechanical and *ideal*, failed from an excess of feeling! I saw nothing else to please me, and I was sorry I had come so far to have my faith in great names and immortal works misgive me. I was ready to exclaim, "Oh painting! I thought thee a substance, and I find thee a shadow!" There was, however, a *Crowning of the Virgin*, a fresco (by Correggio) from the Church of St. Paul,

which was full of majesty, sweetness, and grace; and in this, and the heads of boys and fawns; in the *Chase of Diana*, there is a freedom and breadth of execution, owing to the mode in which they were painted, and which makes them seem pure emanations of the mind, without anything overdone, finical, or little. The cupola of St. Paul's, painted by Correggio in fresco, is quite destroyed, or the figures flutter in idle fragments from the walls. Most of the other pictures in this church were in a tawdry, meretricious style. I was beginning to think that painting was not calculated for churches, coloured surfaces not agreeing with solid pillars and masses of architecture, and also that Italian art was less severe, and more a puppet-show business than I had thought it. I was not a little tired of the painted shrines and paltry images of the Virgin at every hundred yards as we rode along. But if my thoughts were veering to this cheerless, attenuated speculation of nothingness and vanity, they were called back by the sight of the Farnese Theatre —the noblest and most striking monument I have seen of the golden age of Italy. It was built by one of the Farnese family about the fifteenth or sixteenth century, and would hold eight thousand spectators. It is cold, empty, silent as the receptacles of the dead. The walls, roofs, rafters, and even seats, remain perfect; but the tide of population and of wealth, the pomp and pride of patronage and power, seemed to have turned another way, and to have left

it a deserted pile, that would, long ere this, have mouldered into ruin and decay, but that its original strength and vast proportions would not suffer it—a lasting proof of the magnificence of a former age, and of the degeneracy of this! The streets of Parma are beautiful, airy, clean, spacious; the churches elegant; and the walls around it picturesque and delightful. The walls and ramparts, with the gardens and vineyards close to them, have a most romantic effect; and we saw, on a flight of steps near one of the barriers, a group of men, women, and children, that for expression, composition, and colouring rivalled any thing in painting. We here also observed the extreme clearness and brilliancy of the southern atmosphere: the line of hills in the western horizon was distinguished from the sky by a tint so fine that it was barely perceptible.

Bologna is even superior to Parma. If its streets are less stately, its public buildings are more picturesque and varied; and its long arcades, its porticos, and silent walks are a perpetual feast to the eye and the imagination. At Parma (as well as Turin) you see a whole street at once, and have a magical and imposing effect produced once for all. At Bologna you meet with a number of surprises; new beauties unfold themselves, a perspective is gradually prolonged, or branches off by some retired and casual opening, winding its heedless way—the *rus in urbe*—where leisure might be supposed to dwell with learn-

ing. Here is the Falling Tower, and the Neptune of John of Bologna, in the great square. Going along, we met Professor Mezzofanti, who is said to understand thirty-eight languages, English among the rest. He was pointed out to us as a prodigious curiosity by our guide, (Signor Gatti) who has this pleasantry at his tongue's end, that "there is one Raphael to paint, one Mezzofanti to understand languages, and one Signor Gatti to explain everything they wish to know to strangers." We went under the guidance of this accomplished person, and in company of our fellow-travellers, to the Academy, and to the collection of the Marquis Zampieri. In the last there is not a single picture worth seeing, except some old and curious ones of Giotto and Ghirlandaio. One cannot look at these performances (imperfect as they are, with nothing but the high endeavour, the fixed purpose stamped on them, like the attempts of a deformed person at grace) with sufficient veneration, when one considers what they must have cost their authors, or what they have enabled others to do. If Giotto could have seen the works of Raphael or Correggio, would he not have laughed or wept? Yet Raphael and Correggio should have bowed the head to him, for without those first rude beginners and dumb creators of the art, they themselves would never have been!—What amused us here was a sort of wild *Meg Merrilies* of a woman, in a grey coarse dress, and with grey matted hair, that sprang out of a dungeon of a porter's lodge,

and seizing upon Madame ———, dragged her by the arm up the staircase, with unrestrained familiarity and delight. We thought it was some one who presumed on old acquaintance, and was overjoyed at seeing Madame ——— a second time. It was the mere spirit of good fellowship, and the excess of high animal spirits. No woman in England would dream of such an extravagance, who was not mad or drunk. She afterwards followed us about the rooms; and though she rather slunk behind, being somewhat abashed by our evident wish to shake her off, she still seemed to watch for an opportunity to dart upon some one, like an animal whose fondness you cannot get rid of by repeated repulses*. There is a childishness and want of self-control about the Italians, which has an appearance of folly or craziness. We passed a group of women on the road, and though there was something odd in their dress and manner, it was not for some time that we discovered they were insane persons, walking out under the charge of keepers, from

* They tell a story in Paris of a monkey at the Jardin des Plantes, that was noted for its mischievous tricks and desire to fly at every one. Dr. Gall observed the organ of philanthropy particularly strong in the beast, and desired the keeper to let him loose, when he sprung upon the Doctor, and hugged him round the neck with the greatest *bon-hommie* and cordiality, to the astonishment of the keeper and the triumph of craniology! Some men are as troublesome as some animals with their demonstrations of benevolence.

greater degree of vacant vivacity, or thoughtful abstraction than usual.

To return. The Collection of Pictures in the Academy is worthy of Italy and of Bologna. It is chiefly of the Bolognese school; or in that fine, sombre, shadowy tone that seems reflected from sacred subjects or from legendary lore, that corresponds with crucifixions and martyrdoms, that points to skyey glories or hovers round conventual gloom. Here is the St. Cecilia of Raphael (of which the engraving conveys a faithful idea), several Caraccis, Domenichino's St. Teresa, and his St. Peter Martyr, (a respectable, not a formidable rival of Titian's) a Sampson, by Guido (an ill-chosen subject, finely coloured) and the Five Patron-Saints of Bologna, by the same, a very large, finely-painted and impressive picture, occupying the end of the Gallery. Four out of five of the Saints are admirable old Monkish heads (even their very cowls seem to think): the Dead Christ above has a fine monumental effect; and the whole picture, compared with this master's general style, is like "the cathedral's gloom and choir," compared with sunny smiles and the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains. I left this Gallery, once more reconciled to my favourite art. Guido also gains upon me, because I continually see fine pictures of his. "By their works ye shall know them," is a fair rule for judging of painters or men.

There is a side pavement at Bologna, Modena,

and most of the other towns in Italy, so that you do not walk, as in Paris, in continual dread of being run over. The shops have a neat appearance, and are well supplied with the ordinary necessaries of life, fruit, poultry, bread, onions or garlick, cheese and sausages. The butchers' shops look much as they do in England. There is a technical description of the chief towns in Italy, which those who learn the Italian Grammar are told to get by heart —*Genoa la superba, Bologna la dotta, Ravenna l'antica, Firense la bella, Roma la santa.* Some of these I have seen, and others not; and those that I have not seen seem to me the finest. Does not this list convey as good an idea of these places as one can well have? It selects some one distinct feature of them, and that the best. Words may be said, after all, to be the finest things in the world. Things themselves are but a lower species of words, exhibiting the grossnesses and details of matter. Yet, if there be any country answering to the description or idea of it, it is Italy; and to this theory, I must add, the Alps are also a proud exception.

CHAPTER XVI.

We left Bologna on our way to Florence in the afternoon, that we might cross the Apennines the following day. High Mass had been celebrated at Bologna; it was a kind of gala day, and the road was lined with flocks of country-people returning to their homes. At the first village we came to among the hills, we saw, talking to her companions by the road-side, the only very handsome Italian we have yet seen. It was not the true Italian face neither, dark and oval, but more like the face of an English peasant, with heightened grace and animation, with sparkling eyes, white teeth, a complexion breathing health,

——"And when she spake,
Betwixt the pearls and rubies softly brake
A silver sound, which heavenly music seem'd to make."

Our voiture was ascending a hill; and as she walked by the side of it with elastic step, and a bloom like the suffusion of a rosy cloud, the sight of her was doubly welcome, in this land of dingy complexions, squat features, scowling eye-brows and round shoulders.

We slept at ———, nine miles from Bologna, and set off early the next morning, that we might have

the whole day before us. The moon, which had lighted us on our way the preceding evening, still hung over the western horizon, its yellow orb nigh dropping behind the snowy peaks of the highest Apennines, while the sun was rising with dazzling splendour behind a craggy steep that overhung the frozen road we were passing over. The white tops of the Apennines, covered with hoar-frost, gleamed in the misty morning. There was a delightful freshness and novelty in the scene. The Apennines have not the vastness nor the unity of effect of the Alps; but are broken up into a number of abrupt projecting points, that crossing one another, and presenting new combinations as the traveller shifts his position, produce, though a less sublime and imposing, a more varied and picturesque effect. A brook brawled down the precipice on the road-side, a pine-tree or mountain-ash hung over it, and shewed the valley below in a more distant, airy perspective; on the point of a rock half-way down was perched some village-spire or ruined battlement, while hamlets and farm-houses were sheltered in the bosom of the vale far below: a pine-forest rose on the sides of the mountain above, or a bleak tract of brown heath or dark morass was contrasted with the clear pearly tints of the snowy ridges in the higher distance, above which some still loftier peak saluted the sky, tinged with a rosy light.—Such were nearly the features of the landscape all round, and for several miles; and

though we constantly ascended and descended a very winding road, and caught an object now in contact with one part of the scene, now giving relief to another, at one time at a considerable distance beneath our feet, and soon after soaring as high above our heads, yet the elements of beauty or of wildness being the same, the *coup-d'œil*, though constantly changing, was as often repeated, and we at length grew tired of a scenery that still seemed another and the same. One of our pleasantest employments was to remark the teams of oxen and carts that we had lately passed, winding down a declivity in our rear, or suspended on the edge of a precipice, that on the spot we had mistaken for level ground. We had some difficulty too with our driver, who had talked gallantly over-night of hiring a couple of oxen to draw us up the mountain; but when it *came to the push*, his heart failed him, and his Swiss economy prevailed. In addition to his habitual closeness, the windfall of the ten guineas, which was beyond his expectations, had whetted his appetite for gain, and he appeared determined to make a good thing of his present journey. He pretended to bargain with several of the owners, but from his beating them down to the lowest fraction, nothing ever came of it, and when from the thawing of the ice in the sun, the inconvenience became serious, so that we were several times obliged to get out and walk, to enable the horses to proceed with the carriage, he said it was too late.

The country now grew wilder, and the day gloomy. It was three o'clock before we stopped at Pietra Mala to have our luggage examined on entering the Tuscan States; and here we resolved to breakfast, instead of proceeding four miles farther to Covigliaio, where, though we did not choose to pass the night, we had proposed to regale our waking imaginations with a thrilling recollection of the superstitious terrors of the spot, at ease and in safety. Our reception at Pietra Mala was frightful enough; the rooms were cold and empty, and we were met with a vacant stare or with sullen frowns, in lieu of any better welcome. I have since thought that these were probably the consequence of the contempt and ill-humour shewn by other English travellers at the desolateness of the place, and the apparent want of accommodation; for, as the fire of brushwood was lighted, and the eggs, bread, and coffee were brought in by degrees, and we expressed our satisfaction in them, the cloud on the brow of our reluctant entertainers vanished, and melted into thankful smiles. There was still an air of mystery, of bustle, and inattention about the house; persons of both sexes, and of every age, passed and repassed through our sitting room to an inner chamber with looks of anxiety and importance, and we learned at length that the mistress of the inn had been, half an hour before, brought to bed of a fine boy!

We had now to mount the longest and steepest ascent of the Apennines; and Jaques, who began

to be alarmed at the accounts of the state of the road, and at the increasing gloom of the weather, by a great effort of magnanimity had a yoke of oxen put to, and afterwards another horse, to drag us up the worst part; but as soon as he could find an excuse he dismissed both, and we crawled and stumbled on as before. The hills were covered with a dense cloud of sleet and vapour driven before the blast, that wrapped us round, and hung like a blanket or (if the reader pleases) a dark curtain over the more distant range of mountains. On our right were high ledges of frowning rocks, "cloud-capt," and the summits impervious to the sight—on our farthest left, an opening was made which showed a milder sky, evening clouds pillowed on rocks, and a chain of lofty peaks basking in the rays of the setting sun; between, and in the valley below, there was nothing to be seen but mist and crag and grim desolation with the lowering symptoms of the impending storm. We felt uncomfortable, for the increased violence of the wind or thickening of the fog would have presented serious obstacles to our farther progress, which became every moment more necessary as the evening closed in—as it was, we only saw a few yards of the road distinctly before us, which cleared as we advanced forward; and at the side there was sometimes a precipice, beyond which we could distinguish nothing but mist, so that we seemed to be travelling along the edge of the world. The feeling was more striking than agreeable. Our horses were

blinded by the mist, which drove furiously against them, and were nearly exhausted with continued exertion. At length, when we had arrived near the very top of the mountain, we had to cross a few yards of very slippery ice, which became a matter of considerable doubt and difficulty.—The horses could hardly keep their feet in straining to move forward, and if one of them had fallen and been hurt, the accident might have detained us on the middle of the mountain, without any aid near, or made it so late that the descent on the other side would have been dangerous. Luckily, a desperate effort succeeded, and we gained the summit of the hill without accident. We had still some miles to go, and we descended rapidly down on the other side, congratulating ourselves that we had day-light to distinguish the road from the abyss that often skirted it. About half-way down we emerged, to our great delight, from the mist (or *brouillard*, as it is called) that had hitherto enveloped us, and the valley opened at our feet in dim but welcome perspective. We proceeded more leisurely on to La Maschere, having escaped the dangers threatened us from precipices and robbers, and drove into a spacious covered court-yard belonging to the inn, where we were safely housed like a flock of sheep folded for the night. The inn at La Maschere is, like many of the inns in Italy, a set of wide dilapidated halls, without furniture, but with quantities of old and bad pictures, portraits or histories. The people (the attendants

here were women) were obliging and good-humoured, though we could procure neither eggs nor milk with our coffee, but were compelled to have it *black*. We were put into a sitting-room with three beds in it without curtains, as they had no other with a fire-place disengaged, and which, with the coverlids like horse-cloths, and the strong smell of the leaves of Indian corn with which they were stuffed, brought to one's mind the idea of a three-stalled stable. We were refreshed, however, for we slept securely; and we entered upon the last stage betimes the following day, less exhausted than we had been by the first. We had left the unqualified desolation and unbroken irregularity of the Apennines behind us; but we were still occasionally treated with a rocky cliff, a pine-grove, a mountain-torrent; while there was no end of sloping hills with old ruins or modern villas upon them, of farm-houses built in the Tuscan taste, of gliding streams with bridges over them, of meadow-grounds, and thick plantations of olives and cypresses by the road side.

After being gratified for some hours with the cultivated beauty of the scene (rendered more striking by contrast with our late perils), we came to the brow of the hill overlooking Florence, which lay under us, a scene of enchantment, a city planted in a garden, and resembling a rich and varied suburb. The whole presented a brilliant amphitheatre of hill and vale, of buildings, groves, and terraces. The circling heights

were crowned with sparkling villas; the varying landscape, above or below, waved in an endless succession of olive-grounds. The olive is not unlike the common willow in shape or colour, and being still in leaf, gave to the middle of winter the appearance of a grey summer. In the midst, the Duomo and other churches raised their heads; vineyards and olive-grounds climbed the hills opposite till they joined a snowy ridge of Apennines rising above the top of Fesole; one plantation or row of trees after another fringed the ground, like rich lace; though you saw it not, there flowed the Arno; every thing was on the noblest scale, yet finished in the minutest part—the perfection of nature and of art, populous, splendid, full of life, yet simple, airy, embowered. Florence in itself is inferior to Bologna, and some other towns; but the view of it and of the immediate neighbourhood is superior to any I have seen. It is, indeed, quite delicious, and presents an endless variety of enchanting walks. It is not merely the number or the exquisiteness or admirable combination of the objects, their forms or colour, but every spot is rich in associations at once the most classical and romantic. From my friend L. H.'s house at Moiano, you see at one view the village of Setiniano, belonging to Michael Angelo's family, the house in which Machiavel lived, and that where Boccaccio wrote, two ruined castles, in which the rival families of the Gerardeschi and the ——— carried on the most deadly strife, and which seem as

though they might still rear their mouldering heads against each other; and not far from this the *Valley of Ladies* (the scene of *The Decameron*), and Fesole, with the mountains of Perugia beyond. With a view like this, one may think one's sight "enriched," in Burns's phrase. On the ascent towards Fesole is the house where Galileo lived, and where he was imprisoned after his release from the Inquisition, at the time Milton saw him *. In the town itself are Michael Angelo's house, the Baptistery, the gates of which he thought worthy to be the gates of Paradise, the Duomo, older than St. Peter's, the ancient Palace of the Medici family, the Palace Pitti, and here also stands the statue that "enchants the world." The view along the Arno is certainly delightful, though somewhat confined, and the bridges over it grotesque and old, but beautiful.

The streets of Florence are paved entirely with flagstones, and it has an odd effect at first to see the horses and carriages drive over them. You get out of their way, however, more easily than in Paris, from not having the slipperiness of the stones to contend with. The streets get dirty after a slight shower, and the next day you have clouds of dust again. Many of

* He was confined in the Inquisition about six weeks, where it is supposed he was put to the torture; for he had strange pains in his limbs, and bodily disabilities afterwards. In the Museum here is at present preserved, in a glass-case, a finger of Galileo, pointing to the skies! Such is the history of philosophy and superstition.

the narrower streets are like lofty paved courts, cut through a solid quarry of stone. In general, the public buildings are old, and striking chiefly from their massiness, and the quaintness of the style and ornaments. Florence is like a town that has survived itself. It is distinguished by the remains of early and rude grandeur; it is left where it was three hundred years ago. Its history does not seem brought down to the present period. On entering it, you may imagine yourself enclosed in a besieged town; if you turn down any of its inferior streets, you feel as if you might meet the plague still lurking there. Even the walks out of the town are mostly between high stone-walls, which are a bad substitute for hedges. The best and most fashionable is that along the river-side; and the gay dresses and glittering equipages passing under the tall cedar-trees, and with the purple hills in the distance for a back-ground, produce a delightful effect, particularly when seen from the opposite side of the river. The carriages in Florence are numerous and splendid, and rival those in London. Lord Burghersh's, with its six horses and tall footmen in fine liveries, is only distinguishable from the rest by the little child in a blue velvet hat and coat, looking out at the window. The Corso on Sundays, and on other high days and holidays, is filled with a double row of open carriages, like the ring in Hyde-Park, moving slowly in opposite directions, in which you see the flower of the Florentine nobility. I see no difference between them and the

English, except that they are darker and graver. It was Carnival-time when we came, and the town presented something of the same scene that London does at Bartholomew-Fair. The streets were crowded with people, half of them masked. But what soon took off from the gaiety of the motley assemblage was, that you found that the masks were all the same. There was great observance of the season, and great good-will to be pleased, but a dearth of wit and invention. Not merely the uniformity of the masks grew tiresome, but the seeing an inflexible pasteboard countenance moving about upon a living body (and without any thing quaint or extravagant in the actions of the person to justify a resort to so grotesque a disguise) shocked by its unmeaning incongruity. May-day in London is a favourable version of the Carnival here. The finery of the chimney-sweepers is an agreeable and intelligible contrast to their usual squalidness. Their three days' license has spirit, noise, and mirth in it; whereas the dull eccentricity and mechanical antics of the Carnival are drawled out till they are merged without any violent effort in the solemn farce of Lent. It had been a fine season this year, and it is said that the difference between a good season and a bad one to the trades-people is so great, that it pays the rent of their houses. No one is allowed to wear a mask, after Lent commences, and the priests never mask. There is no need that they should. There is no ringing of bells here as with us (triple bob-majors have not sent their

cheering sound into the heart of Italy); but during the whole ten days or fortnight that the Carnival continues, there is a noise and jangling of bells, such as is made by the idle boys in a country town on our Shrove-Tuesday. We could not tell exactly what to make of the striking of the clocks at first: at eight they struck two; at twelve six. We thought they were put back to prevent the note of time, or were thrown into confusion to accord with the license of the occasion. A day or two cleared up the mystery, and we found that the clocks here (at least those in our immediate neighbourhood) counted the hours by sixes, instead of going on to twelve—which method, when you are acquainted with it, saves time and patience in telling the hour. I have only heard of two masks that seemed to have any point or humour in them; and one of these was not a mask, but a person who went about with his face uncovered, but keeping it, in spite of every thing he saw or heard, in the same unmoved position as if it were a mask. The other was a person so oddly disguised, that you did not know what to make of him, whether he were man or woman, beast or bird, and who, pretending to be equally at a loss himself, went about asking every one, if they could tell him what he was? A Neapolitan nobleman, who was formerly in England (Count Acetto), carried the liberty of masking too far. He went to the English Ambassador's in the disguise of a monk, carrying a bundle of wood at his back, with a woman's legs peeping out, and

written on a large label, "Provision for the Convent." The clergy, it is said, interfered, and he has been exiled to Lucca. Lord Burghersh remonstrated loudly at this step, as a violation of the dignity and privileges of Ambassadors. The offence, whatever it was, was committed at his house, and the English Ambassador's house is supposed to be in England—the *absentees* here were alarmed, for at this rate strangers might be sent out of the town at an hour's notice for a jest. The Count called in person on the Grand Duke, who shook him kindly by the hand—the Countess Rinuccini demanded an interview with the Grand Duchess—but the clergy must be respected, and the Count has been sent away. There has been a good deal of talk and bustle about it—ask the opinion of a dry Scotchman, who judges of every thing by precedent, and he will tell you, "It is just like our *Alien Bill.*" It is a rule here that a priest is never brought upon the stage. How do they contrive to act our *Romeo and Juliet?* Moliere's *Tartuffe* is not a priest, but merely a saint. When this play was forbidden to be acted a second time by the Archbishop of Paris, and the audience loudly demanded the reason of its being withdrawn, Moliere came forward and said, "*Monsieur l' Archevêque ne veut pas qu'* il *soit joué?*" This was a hundred and fifty years ago. With so much wit and sense in the world, one wonders that there are any Tartuffes left in it; but for the last hundred and fifty years, it must be confessed, they have had but an uneasy life of it.

Lent is not kept here very strictly. The streets, however, have rather "a fishy fume" in consequence of it; and, generally speaking, the use of garlick, tobacco, cloves and oil gives a medicated taint to the air. The number of pilgrims to Rome, at this season, is diminished from 80 or 90,000 a century ago, to a few hundreds at present. We passed two on the road, with their staff and scrip and motley attire. I did not look at them with any particle of respect. The impression was, that they were either knaves or fools. The farther they come on this errand, the more you have a right to suspect their motives, not that I by any means suppose these are always bad—but those who signalise their zeal by such long marches obtain not only absolution for the past, but extraordinary indulgence for the future, so that if a person meditate any baseness or mischief, a pilgrimage to Rome is his high road to it. The Popish religion is a convenient cloak for crime, an embroidered robe for virtue. It makes the essence of good and ill to depend on rewards and punishments, and places these in the hands of the priests, for the honour of God and the welfare of the church. Their path to Heaven is a kind of gallery directly over the path to Hell; or, rather, it is the same road, only that at the end of it you kneel down, lift up your hands and eyes, and say you have gone wrong, and you are admitted into the right-hand gate, instead of the left-hand one. Hell is said, in the strong language of

controversial divinity, to be "paved with good intentions." Heaven, according to some fanatical creeds, is "paved with mock-professions." Devotees and proselytes are passed on like wretched paupers, with false certificates of merit, by hypocrites and bigots, who consider submission to their opinions and power as more than equivalent to a conformity to the dictates of reason or the will of God. All this is charged with being a great piece of cant and imposture: it is not more so than human nature itself. Popery is said to be a *make-believe* religion: man is a *make-believe* animal—he is never so truly himself as when he is acting a part; he is ever at war with himself—his theory with his practice—what he would be (and therefore pretends to be) with what he is; and Popery is an admirable receipt to reconcile his higher and his lower nature in a beautiful *equivoque* or *double-entendre* of forms and mysteries,—the palpableness of sense with the dim abstractions of faith, the indulgence of passion with the atonement of confession and abject repentance when the fit is over, the debasement of the actual with the elevation of the ideal part of man's nature, the Pagan with the Christian religion; to substitute lip-service, genuflections, adoration of images, counting of beads, repeating of *Aves* for useful works or pure intentions, and to get rid at once of all moral obligation, of all self-control and self-respect, by the proxy of maudlin superstition, by a slavish submission to priests and saints, by prostrating

ourselves before them, and entreating them to take our sins and weaknesses upon them, and supply us with a saving grace (at the expence of a routine of empty forms and words) out of the abundance of their merits and imputed righteousness. This religion suits the pride and weakness of man's intellect, the indolence of his will, the cowardliness of his fears, the vanity of his hopes, his disposition to reap the profits of a good thing and leave the trouble to others, the magnificence of his pretensions with the meanness of his performance, the pampering of his passions, the stifling of his remorse, the making sure of this world and the next, the saving of his soul and the comforting of his body. It is adapted equally to kings and people—to those who love power or dread it—who look up to others as Gods, or who would trample them under their feet as reptiles—to the devotees of show and sound, or the visionary and gloomy recluse—to the hypocrite and bigot—to saints or sinners—to fools or knaves—to men, women, and children. In short, its success is owing to this, that it is a mixture of bitter sweets—that it is a remedy that soothes the disease it affects to cure—that it is not an antidote, but a vent for the peccant humours, the follies and vices of mankind, with a salvo in favour of appearances, a reserve of loftier aspirations (whenever it is convenient to resort to them), and a formal recognition of certain general principles, as a courtesy of speech, or a compromise between the understanding and the pas-

sions! *Omne tulit punctum.* There is nothing to be said against it, but that it is contrary to reason and common sense; and even were they to prevail over it, some other absurdity would start up in its stead, not less mischievous but less amusing; for man cannot exist long without having scope given to his propensity to the marvellous and contradictory. Methodism with us is only a bastard kind of Popery, with which the rabble are intoxicated; and to which even the mistresses of Kings might resort (but for its vulgarity) to repair faded charms with divine graces, to exchange the sighs of passion for the tears of a no less luxurious repentance, and to exert one more act of power by making proselytes of their royal paramours!

The Popish calendar is but a transposition of the Pagan Mythology. The images, shrines, and pictures of the Virgin Mary, that we meet at the corner of every street or turning of a road, are not of modern date, but coeval with the old Greek and Roman superstitions. There were the same shrines and images formerly dedicated to Flora, or Ceres, or Pomona, and the flowers and the urn still remain. The oaths of the common people are to this day more Heathen than Catholic. They swear "By the countenance of Bacchus"—"By the heart of Diana." A knavish innkeeper, if you complain of the badness of his wine, swears "*Per Bacco e per Dio,*" "By Bacchus and by God, that it is good!" I wonder when the change in the forms of image-worship took place in

the old Roman States, and what effect it had. I used formerly to wonder how or when the people in the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland, and who live in solitudes to which the town of Keswick is *the polite world*, and its lake "the Leman-Lake," first passed from Popery to Protestantism, what difference it made in them at the time, or has done to the present day? The answer to this question would go a good way to shew how little the common people know of or care for any theory of religion, considered merely as such. Mr. Southey is on the spot, and might do something towards a solution of the difficulty!

Customs come round. I was surprised to find, at the Hotel of the *Four Nations*, where we stopped the two first days, that we could have a pudding for dinner (a thing that is not to be had in all France); and I concluded this was a luxury which the Italians had been compelled to adopt from the influx of the English, and the loudness of their demands for comfort. I understand it is more probable that this dish is indigenous rather than naturalized; and that we got it from them in the time of Queen Elizabeth, when our intercourse with Italy was more frequent than it was with France. We might have remained at the *Four Nations*; for eighteen francs a day, living in a very sumptuous manner; but we have removed to apartments fitted up in the English fashion, for ten piastres (two guineas) a month, and where the whole

of our expenses for boiled and roast, with English cups and saucers and steamed potatoes, does not come to thirty shillings a week. We have every English comfort with clearer air and a finer country. It was exceedingly cold when we first came, and we felt it the more from impatience and disappointment. From the thinness of the air there was a feeling of nakedness about you; you seemed as if placed in an empty receiver. Not a particle of warmth or feeling was left in your whole body: it was just as if the spirit of cold had penetrated every part; one might be said to be *vitrified.* It is now milder (Feb. 23), and like April weather in England. There is a balmy lightness and vernal freshness in the air. Might I once more see the coming on of Spring as erst in the spring-time of my life, it would be here! I cannot speak to the subject of manners in this place, except as to outward appearances, which are the same as in a country town in England. Judging by the fashionable test on this subject, they must be very bad and desperate indeed; for none of that stream of prostitution flows down the streets, that in the British metropolis is supposed to purify the morality of private families, and to carry off every taint of grossness or licentiousness from the female heart. Cecisbeism still prevails here, less in the upper, more in the lower classes; and may serve as a subject for the English to vent their spleen and outrageous love of virtue upon.

Fesole, that makes so striking a point of view near Florence, was one of the twelve old Tuscan cities that existed before the time of the Romans, and afterwards in a state of hostility to them. It is supposed to have been originally founded by a Greek colony that came over with Cecrops, and others go back to the time of Japhet or to Hesiod's theogony. Florence was not founded till long after. It is said to have occupied the three conically-shaped hills which stand about three miles from Florence. Here was fought the last great battle between Catiline and the Senate; and here the Romans besieged and starved to death an army of the Goths. It is a place of the highest antiquity and renown, but it does not bear the stamp of anything extraordinary upon its face. You stand upon a bleak, rocky hill, without suspecting it to have been the centre of a thronged population, the seat of battles and of mighty events in eldest times. So you pass through cities and stately palaces, and cannot be persuaded that, one day, no trace of them will be left. Italy is not favourable to the look of age or of length of time. The ravages of the climate are less fatal; the oldest places seem rather deserted than mouldering into ruin, and the youth and beauty of surrounding objects mixes itself up even with the traces of devastation and decay. The monuments of antiquity appear to enjoy a green old age in the midst of the smiling productions of modern civilization. The gloom of the seasons does not at

any rate add its weight to the gloom of antiquity. It was in Italy, I believe, that Milton had the spirit and buoyancy of imagination to write his Latin sonnet on the Platonic idea of the archetype of the world, where he describes the shadowy cave in which "dwelt Eternity" (*otiosa eternitas*), and ridicules the apprehension that Nature could ever grow old, or "shake her starry head with palsy." It has been well observed, that there is more of the germ of Paradise Lost in the author's early Latin poems, than in his early English ones, which are in a strain rather playful and tender, than stately or sublime. It is said that several of Milton's Poems, which he wrote at this period, are preserved in manuscript in the libraries in Florence; but it is probable that if so, they are no more than duplicates of those already known, which he gave to friends. His reputation here was high, and delightful to think of; and a volume was dedicated to him by Malatesta, a poet of the day, and a friend of Redi—"To the ingenuous and learned young Englishman, John Milton." When one thinks of the poor figure which our countrymen often make abroad, and also of the supposed reserved habits and puritanical sourness of our great English Epic Poet, one is a little in pain for his reception among foreigners, and surprised at his success, for which, perhaps, his other accomplishments (as his skill in music) and his personal advantages, may, in some measure, account. There is another consideration to be added,

which is, that Milton did not labour under the disadvantage of addressing foreigners in their native tongue, but conversed with them on equal terms in Latin. That was surely the polite and enviable age of letters, when the learned spoke a common and well-known tongue, instead of petty, huckstering, Gothic dialects of different nations! Now, every one who is not a Frenchman, or who does not gabble French, is no better than a stammerer or a changeling out of his own country. I do not complain of this as a very great grievance; but it certainly prevents those far-famed meetings between learned men of different nations, which are recorded in history, as of Sir Thomas More with Erasmus, and of Milton with the philosophers and poets of Italy.

> "Sweet is the dialect of Arno's vale:
> Though half consumed, I gladly turn to hear."

So Dante makes one of his heroes exclaim. It is pleasant to hear or speak one's native tongue when abroad; but possibly the language of that higher and adopted country, which was familiar to the scholar of former times, sounded even sweeter to the ear of friendship or of genius.

CHAPTER XVII.

The first thing you do when you get to a town abroad is to go to the Post-office in expectation of letters, which you are sure not to receive exactly in proportion as you are anxious to have them. Friends at a distance have you at a disadvantage; and they let you know it, if they will let you know nothing else. There is in this a love of power or of contradiction, and at the same time a want of imagination. They cannot change places with you, or suppose how you can be so much at a loss about what is so obvious to them. It seems putting them to unnecessary trouble to transmit a self-evident truth (which it is upon the spot) a thousand miles (where it becomes a discovery). You have this comfort, however, under the delay of letters, that they have no bad news to send you, or you would hear of it in an instant.

When you are disappointed of your letters at the post-office at Florence, you turn round, and find yourself in the square of the Grand Duke, with the old Palace opposite to you, and a number of colossal statues, bleached in the open air, in front of it. They seem a species of huge stone-masonry. What is your surprise to learn, that they are the Hercules of Bandi-

nello, and the David of Michael Angelo! Not far from these, is the Perseus of Benvenuto Cellini, which he makes such a *fuss* about in his Life*. It is of bronze. After a great deal of cabal, before he was employed on this work, and great hostility and disagreeable obstacles thrown in his way in the progress of it, he at length finished the mould, and prepared to cast the figure. He found that the copper which he had at first thrown in did not work kindly. After one or two visits to the furnace, he grew impatient, and seizing on all the lead, iron, and brass he could lay his hands on in the house, threw it *pell-mell*, and in a fit of desperation, into the melting mass, and retired to wait the result. After passing an hour in the greatest agitation, he returned; and inspecting the cast, to his extreme joy discovered it to be smooth and perfect, without a flaw in any part, except a dint in the heel. He then sat down to enjoy his triumph over his enemies, and to devour a cold chicken (which he had provided for his supper) with vast composure and relish. It is a pity that a work produced under such auspicious circumstances does not altogether answer the romantic expectations formed of it. There is something petty and forced about it; and it smells of the gold-

* The jewellers' shops on the bridge, in one of which he was brought up, still remain. The Rape of the Sabines, by John of Bologna, near Benvenuto's Perseus, is an admirable group: nothing can exceed the fleshiness and softened contours of the female figure, seen in every direction.

smith's and jeweller's shop. I would rather see the large silver vase, richly embossed by him with groups of flowers and figures, which was ordered by the Pope and placed under his table for the Cardinals and other guests to throw their bones into, instead of throwing them on the floor for the dogs to pick up, as had hitherto been the custom—a fine proof of the mingled barbarism and refinement of those days*. Benvenuto was a character and a genius, and more of a character than of a genius; for, after all, the greatest geniuses are "men of no mark or likelihood." Their strongest impulses are not personal, but pass out of themselves into the universe; nor do they waste their energies upon their private whims and perverse peculiarities. In Bandinello one does not look for much; he was never much esteemed, and is made a butt of by Benvenuto Cellini. But what shall we say to a *commonplace* or barbarous piece of work by Michael Angelo? The David is as if a large mass of solid marble fell upon one's head, to crush one's faith in great names. It looks like an awkward overgrown actor at one of our minor theatres, without his clothes: the head is too big for the body, and it has a helpless expression of distress. The Bacchus in the Gallery, by the same artist, is no better. It is *pot-bellied*, lank, and with a sickly, mawkish aspect. Both these statutes were, it is true, done when he was very young; and the latter, when finished,

*See his Memoirs of himself, lately re-translated by Thomas Roscoe, Esq.

he buried underground, and had it dug up as an antique, and when it was pronounced by the *virtuosi* of the day to be superior to any thing in modern art, he produced the arm (which he had broken off), and claimed it as his own, to the confusion of his adversaries. Such is the story; and under the safeguard of this tradition, it has passed, criticism-proof. There are two pictures here attributed to this great artist; one in the Gallery, and another in the Palace Pitti, of *The Fates*, which are three meagre, dry, mean-looking old women. I shall not return to this subject till I get to the Vatican, and then I hope to tell a different story. Nothing more casts one down than to find an utter disproportion between the reality and one's previous conceptions in a case of this kind, when one has been brooding all one's life over an idea of greatness. If one could sneak off with one's disappointment in one's pocket, and say nothing about it, or whisper it to the reeds, or bury it in a hole, or throw it into the river (Arno), where no one would fish it up, it would not signify; but to be obliged to note it in one's common-place book, and publish it to all the world, 'tis villainous! It is well one can turn from disagreeable thoughts like these to a landscape of Titian's (the Holy Family at the Pitti Palace). A green bank in the fore-ground presents a pastoral scene of sheep and cattle reposing; then you have the deep green of the middle distance, then the blue-topped hills, and the golden sky beyond, with the red branches of an autumn

wood rising into it; and in the faces of the bending group you see the tints of the evening sky reflected, and the freshness of the landscape breathed on their features. The depth and harmony of colouring in natural objects, refined in passing through the painter's mind, mellowed by the hand of time, has acquired the softness and shadowy brilliancy of a dream, and while you gaze at it, you seem to be entranced! But to take things somewhat more in order.—

One of the striking things in the Gallery at Florence (given to the City by one of the Medici Family) is the Collection, of Antique Busts. The Statues of Gods are the poetry of the art of that period. The busts of men and women handed down to us are the history of the species. You see the busts of Vitellius (whose throat seems bursting with "the jowl" and a dish of lampreys), Galba, Trajan, Augustus, Julia, Faustina, Messalina; and you ask, were there real beings like these existing two thousand years ago? It is an extension of the idea of humanity; and "even in death there is animation too." History is vague and shadowy, but sculpture gives life and body to it; the names and letters in time-worn books start up real people in marble, and you no longer doubt their identity with the present race. Nature produced forms then as perfect as she does now.—Forsyth and others have endeavoured to invalidate the authenticity of these busts, and to shew that few of them can be traced with certainty to the persons whose names they bear. That with me is not

the question. The interesting point is not to know *who* they were, but *that* they were. There is no doubt that they are busts of people living two thousand years ago, and that is all that my moral demands. As to individual character, it would be as well sometimes to find it involved in obscurity; for some of the persons are better looking than for the truth of physiognomy they ought to be. Nero is as handsome a gentleman as his eulogists could wish him to be. The truth is, that what pleases me in these busts and others of the same kind that I have seen is, that they very much resemble English people of sense and education in the present day, only with more regular features. They are grave, thoughtful, unaffected. There is not a face among them that you could mistake for a French face. These fine old heads, in short, confirm one in the idea of general humanity: French faces stagger one's faith in the species!

There are two long galleries enriched with busts and statues of the most interesting description, with a series of productions of the early Florentine school, the Flying Mercury of John of Bologna, &c.; and in a room near the centre (called the Tribune) stands the Venus of Medici, with some other statues and pictures not unworthy to do her homage. I do not know what to say of the Venus, nor is it necessary to say much where all the world have already formed an opinion for themselves; yet, perhaps, this opinion, which seems the most universal, is the least so, and the opinion of

all the world means that of no one individual in it. The end of criticism, however, is rather to direct attention to objects of taste, than to dictate to it. Besides, one has seen the Venus so often and in so many shapes, that custom has blinded one equally to its merits or defects. Instead of giving an opinion, one is disposed to turn round and ask, "What do *you* think of it?" It is like a passage in the "Elegant Extracts," which one has read and admired, till one does not know what to make of it, or how to affix any ideas to the words: beauty and sweetness end in an unmeaning commonplace! If I might, notwithstanding, hazard a hypercriticism, I should say, that it is a little too much like an exquisite marble doll. I should conjecture (for it is only conjecture where familiarity has neutralized the capacity of judging) that there is a want of sentiment, of character, a balance of pretensions as well as of attitude, a good deal of insipidity, and an over-gentility. There is no expression of mental refinement, nor much of voluptuous blandishment. There is great softness, sweetness, symmetry, and timid grace—a faultless tameness, a negative perfection. The Apollo Belvidere is positively bad, a theatrical coxcomb, and ill-made; I mean compared with the Theseus. The great objection to the Venus is, that the form has not the true feminine proportions; it is not sufficiently large in the lower limbs, but tapers too much to a point, so that it wants firmness and a sort of indolent repose (the proper attribute of woman), and seems as if the

least thing would overset it. In a word, the Venus is a very beautiful toy, but not the Goddess of Love, or even of Beauty. It is not the statue Pygmalion fell in love with; nor did any man ever wish or fancy his mistress to be like it. There is something beyond it, both in imagination and in nature. Neither have we a firm faith in the identity of the Goddess; it is a nice point, whether any such form ever existed. Now let us say what we will of the *ideal*, it ought, when embodied to the senses, to bear the stamp of the most absolute reality, for it is only an image taken from nature, with every thing omitted that might contradict or disturb its uniformity. The Venus is not a poetical and abstract personification of certain qualities; but an individual model, that has been altered and tampered with. It would have had a better effect if executed in ivory, with gold sandals and bracelets, like that of Phidias (mentioned by Pliny), to define its pretensions as belonging to the class of ornamental art; for it neither carries the mind into the regions of ancient mythology, nor of ancient poetry, nor rises to an equality of style with modern poetry or painting. Raphael has figures of far greater grace, both mental and bodily. The Apollo of Medicis, which is in the same room, is a very delightful specimen of Grecian art; but it has the fault of being of that equivocal size (I believe called *small-life*) which looks like diminutive nature, not nature diminished.

Raphael's Fornarina (which is also in this highly-

embellished cabinet of art) faces the Venus, and is a downright, point-blank contrast to it. Assuredly no charge can be brought against it of *mimmini-piminee* affectation or shrinking delicacy. It is robust, full to bursting, coarse, luxurious, hardened, but wrought up to an infinite degree of exactness and beauty in the details. It is the perfection of vulgarity and refinement together. The Fornarina is a bouncing, buxom, sullen, saucy baker's daughter—but painted, idolized, immortalized by Raphael! Nothing can be more homely and repulsive than the original; you see her bosom swelling like the dough rising in the oven; the tightness of her skin puts you in mind of Trim's story of the sausage-maker's wife—nothing can be much more enchanting than the picture—than the care and delight with which the artist has seized the lurking glances of the eye, curved the corners of the mouth, smoothed the forehead, dimpled the chin, rounded the neck, till by innumerable delicate touches, and the "labour of love," he has converted a coarse, rude mass into a miracle of art. Raphael, in the height of his devotion, and as it were to insinuate that nothing could be too fine for this idol of his fancy (as Rousseau prided himself in writing the letters of Julia on the finest paper with gilt edges) has painted the chain on the Fornarina's neck with actual gold-leaf. Titian would never have thought of such a thing; he could not have been guilty of such a solecism in painting, as to introduce a solid substance

without shadow. Highly as Raphael has laboured this portrait, it still shews his inferiority to Titian in the imitative part of painting. The colour on the cheeks of the Fornarina seems laid on the skin; in the girl by Titian at the Pitti Palace, it is seen through it. The one appears tanned by the sun; the other to have been out in the air, or is like a flower "just washed in the dew." Again, the surface of the flesh in Raphael is so smooth, that you are tempted to touch it: in Titian, it retires from the touch into a shadowy recess. There is here a duplicate (varied) of his *Mistress at her Toilette* (to be seen in the Louvre), dressed in a loose night-robe, and with the bosom nearly bare. It is very carefully finished, and is a rich study of colouring, expression, and natural grace. Of the Titian Venus (with her gouvernante and chest of clothes in the background) I cannot say much. It is very like the common print. The Endymion by Guercino has a divine character of pensive softness, and youthful, manly grace, and the impression made by the picture answers to that made by the fable—an excellent thing in history! It is one of the finest pictures in Florence. I should never have done if I were to go into the details. I can only mention a few of the principal. Near the Fornarina is the Young St. John in the Wilderness, by Raphael; it is very dark, very hard, and very fine, like an admirable carving in wood. He has here also two Holy Families, full of playful sweetness and mild repose. There

are also two by Correggio of the same subject, and a fine and bold study of the Head of a Boy. There is a spirit of joy and laughing grace contained in this head, as the juice of wine is in the grape. Correggio had a prodigious raciness and gusto, when he did not fritter them away by false refinement and a sort of fastidious hypercriticism upon himself. His sketches, I suspect, are better than his finished works. One of the Holy Families here is the very acme of the *affettuoso* and Della Cruscan style of painting. The figure of the Madonna is like a studiously-involved period or turn upon words: the infant Christ on the ground is a diminutive appellation, a prettiness, a fairy-fancy. Certainly, it bears no proportion to the Mother, whose hands are bent back over it with admiration and delight, till grace becomes a *cramp*, and her eye-lids droop and quiver over the fluttering object of her "strange child-worship," almost as if they were moved by metallic tractors. The other Madonna is perfectly free from any taint of affectation. It is a plain rustic beauty, innocent, interesting, simple, without one contortion of body or of mind. It is sweetly painted. The Child is also a pure study after nature: the blood is tingling in his veins, and his face has an admirable expression of careless infantine impatience. The old Man at the side is a masterpiece, with all this painter's knowledge of fore-shortening, *chiaro-scuro*, the management of drapery, &c. Herodias's Daughter, by Luini, is an elaborate and

successful imitation of Leonardo da Vinci. The Medusa's Head of the latter is hardly, I think, so fine as Barry's description of it. It has not quite the watery languor—the dim obscurity. The eyes of the female are too much like the eyes of the snakes, red, crusted, and edgy. I shall only notice one picture more in this collection—the Last Judgment, by Bronzino. It has vast merit in the drawing and expression, but its most remarkable quality is the amazing relief without any perceivable shadow, and the utmost clearness with the smallest possible variety of tint. It looks like a Mosaic painting. The specimens of the Dutch and other foreign schools here are upon a small scale, and of inferior value.

The Palace Pitti was begun by one of the Strozzi, who boasted that he would build a palace with a court-yard in it, in which another palace might dance. He had nearly ruined himself by the expense, when one of the Medici took it off his hands and completed it. It is at present the residence of the Grand Duke. The view within over the court-yard to the terrace and mount above is superb. Here is the Venus of Canova, an elegant sylph-like figure; but Canova was more to be admired for delicacy of finishing, than for expression or conception of general form. At the Gallery there is one room full of extraordinary pictures and statues: at the Palace Pitti there are six or seven covered with some of the finest portraits and history-pieces in the world, and the walls are dark

with beauty, and breathe an air of the highest art from them. It is one of the richest and most original Collections I have seen. It is not so remarkable for variety of style or subject as for a noble opulence and aristocratic pride, having to boast names in the highest rank of art, and many of their best works. The Palace Pitti formerly figured in the Catalogue of the Louvre, which it had contributed to enrich with many of its most gorgeous jewels, which have been brought back to their original situation, and which now shine here, though not with unreflected lustre, nor in solitary state. Among these, for instance, is Titian's Hippolito di Medici (which the late Mr. Opie pronounced the finest portrait in the world), with the spirit and breadth of history, and with the richness, finish, and glossiness of an enamel picture. I remember the first time I ever saw it, it stood on an easel which I had to pass, with the back to me, and as I turned and saw it with the boar-spear in its hand, and its keen glance bent upon me, it seemed "a thing of life," with supernatural force and grandeur. The famous music-piece by Giorgioni was at one time in the Louvre, and is not a whit inferior to Titian. The head turned round of the man playing on the harpsichord, for air, expression, and a true gusto of colouring, may challenge competition all the world through. There goes a tradition that these are the portraits of Luther and Calvin. Giorgioni died at the age of thirty-four, heart-broken, it is said, because

one of his scholars had robbed him of his mistress—possibly the very beauty whose picture is introduced here. Leo. X., by Raphael, that fine, stern, globular head, on which "deliberation sits and public care," is in the same room with the Cardinal Bentivoglio, one of Vandyke's happiest and most *spiritual* heads—a fine group of portraits by Rubens, of himself, his brother, Grotius and Justus Lipsius, all in one frame—an admirable Holy Family, in this master's very best manner, by Julio Romano—and the Madonna della Seggia of Raphael—all of these were formerly in the Louvre. The last is painted on wood, and worn, so as to have a crayon look. But for the grouping, the unconscious look of intelligence in the children, and the rounding and fleshiness of the forms of their limbs, this is one of the artist's most unrivalled works. There are also several by Andrea del Sarto, conceived and finished with the highest taste and truth of feeling; a Nymph and Satyr by Giorgioni, of great gusto; Hercules and Antæus, by Schiavoni (an admirable study of bold drawing and poetical colouring), an unfinished sketch by Guido, several by Cigoli and Fra. Bartolomeo; a girl in a flowered dress, by Titian (of which Mr. Northcote possesses a beautiful copy by Sir Joshua); another portrait of a Man in front view and a Holy Family, by the same; and one or two fine pieces by Rubens and Rembrandt. There is a Parmegiano here, in which is to be seen the origin of Mr. Fuseli's style, a child in its

mother's lap, with its head rolling away from its body, the mother's face looking down upon it with green and red cheeks tapering to a point, and a thigh of an angel, which you cannot well piece to an urn which he carries in his hand, and which seems like a huge scale of the "shardborne beetle."—The grotesque and discontinuous are, in fact, carried to their height. Here is also the Conspiracy of Catiline, by Salvator Rosa, which looks more like a Cato-street Conspiracy than any thing else, or a bargain struck in a blacksmith's shop; and a Battle-piece by the same artist, with the round haunches and flowing tail of a white horse repeated, and some fierce faces, hid by the smoke and their helmets, of which you can make neither head nor tail. Salvator was a great landscape-painter; but both he and Lady Morgan have been guilty of a great piece of *egotism* in supposing that he was any thing more. These are the chief failures, but in general out of heaps of pictures there is scarce one that is not of the highest interest both in itself, and from collateral circumstances. Those who come in search of high Italian art will here find it in perfection; and if they do not feel this, they may turn back at once. The pictures in the Pitti Palace are finely preserved, and have that deep, mellow tone of age upon them which is to the eyes of a connoisseur in painting as the rust of medals or the crust on wine is to connoisseurs and judges of a different stamp.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The road between Florence and Rome by Sienna is not very interesting, though it presents a number of reflections to those who are well acquainted with the changes that have taken place in the history and agriculture of these districts. Shortly after you leave Florence, the way becomes dreary and barren or unhealthy. Towards the close of the first day's journey, however, we had a splendid view of the country we were to travel, which lay stretched out beneath our feet to an immense distance, as we descended into the little town of Pozzo Borgo. Deep valleys sloped on each side of us, from which the smoke of cottages occasionally curled: the branches of an overhanging birch-tree or a neighbouring ruin gave relief to the grey, misty landscape, which was streaked by dark pine-forests, and speckled by the passing clouds; and in the extreme distance rose a range of hills glittering in the evening sun, and scarcely distinguishable from the ridge of clouds that hovered near them. We did not reach these hills (on the top of one of which stands the fort of Radicofani) till the end of two days' journey, making a distance of be-

tween fifty and sixty miles, so that their miniature size and fairy splendour, as they crowned the far-off horizon, may be easily guessed. We did not find the accommodation on the road quite so bad as we had expected. The chief want is of milk, which is to be had only in the morning; but we remedied this defect by taking a bottle of it with us. The weather was cold enough (in the middle of March) to freeze it. The economy of life is here reduced to a very great simplicity, absolute necessaries from day to day and from hand to mouth; and nothing is allowed for the chapter of accidents, or the irregular intrusion of strangers. The mechanism of English inns is accounted for by the certainty of the arrival of customers, with full pockets and empty stomachs. There every road is a thoroughfare; here a traveller is a curiosity, and we did not meet ten carriages on our journey, a distance of a hundred and ninety-three miles, and which it took us six days to accomplish. I may add that we paid only seven louis for our two places in the Voiture (which, besides, we had entirely to ourselves) our expences on the road included. This is cheap enough.

Sienna is a fine old town, but more like a receptacle of the dead than the residence of the living. "IT WAS," might be written over the entrance to this, as to most of the towns in Italy. The magnificence of the buildings corresponds but ill with the squalidness of the inhabitants; there seems no reason for crowding the streets so close together when there are so few

people in them. There is at present no enemy without to huddle them together within the walls, whatever might have been the case in former times: for miles you do not meet a human being, or discern the traces of a human dwelling. The view through the noble arch of the gate as you leave Sienna is at once exquisitely romantic and picturesque: otherwise, the country presents a most deplorable aspect for a length of way. Nature seems to have here taken it upon her to play the part of a cinder-wench, and to have thrown up her incessant heaps of clay and ashes, without either dignity or grace. At a distance to the right and left, you see the stately remains of the ancient Etruscan cities, cresting the heights and built for defence; and here and there, perched on the top of a cliff, the ruinous haunt of some bandit chief (the scourge of later days), that might be compared in imagination to some dragon, old and blind, still watching for its long-lost prey, and sharing the desolation it has made. There are two of these near the wretched inn of La Scala, where we stopped the third morning, rising in lonely horror from the very point of two hills, facing each other and only divided by a brook, that baffle description, and require the artist's boldest pencil. Aided by the surrounding gloom, and shrouded by the driving mist (as they were when we passed), they throw the mind back into a trance of former times, and the cry of midnight revelry, of midnight murder is heard from the crumbling walls. The romantic bridge and hamlet

under them begins the ascent of Radicofani. The extensive ruin at the top meets your view and disappears repeatedly during the long, winding, toilsome ascent. Over a tremendous valley to the left, we saw the distant hills of Perugia, covered with snow and blackened with clouds, and a heavy sleet was falling around us. We started, on being told that the post-house stood directly on the other side of the fort (at a height of 2400 feet above the level of the sea), and that we were to pass the night there. It was like being lodged in a cloud: it seemed the very rocking-cradle of storms and tempests. As we wound round the road at the foot of it, we were relieved from our apprehensions. It was a fortress built by stubborn violence for itself, that might be said to scowl defiance on the world below, and to promise security and shelter to those within its reach. Huge heaps of round stones, gnarled like iron, and that looked as if they would break the feet that trusted themselves among them, were rolled into the space between the heights and the road-side. The middle or principal turret, which rose between the other two, was thrown into momentary perspective by the mist; a fragment of an outer wall stood beneath, half covered with ivy; close to it was an old chapel-spire built of red brick, and a small hamlet crouched beneath the ramparts. It reminded me, by its preternatural strength and sullen aspect, of the castle of Giant Despair in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The dark and stern spirit of former times might be conceived to have

'entrenched itself here as in its last hold; to have looked out and laughed at precipices and storms, and the puny assaults of hostile bands, and resting on its red right arm, to have wasted away through inaction and disuse in its unapproachable solitude and barbarous desolation. Never did I see any thing so rugged and so stately, apparently so formidable in a former period, so forlorn in this. It was a majestic shadow of the mighty past, suspended in another region, belonging to another age. I might take leave of it in the words of old Burnet, whose Latin glows among these cold hills, *Vale augusta sedes, digna rege; vale augusta rupes, semper mihi memoranda!*—We drove into the inn-yard, which resembled a barrack (so do most of the inns on the road), with its bed-rooms like hospital-wards, and its large apartments for assemblages of armed men, now empty, gloomy, and unfurnished; but where we found a hospitable welcome, and by the aid of a double fee to the waiters every thing very comfortable. The first object was to procure milk for our tea (of which last article we had brought some very good from the shop of Signor Pippini, at Florence*) and the next thing was to lay in a stock for the remaining half of our journey. We were not sorry to pass a night at the height of 2400 feet above the level of the sea, and immediately under this famous fortress. The winds "howled through

* Excellent tea is to be had at Rome at an Italian shop the at corner of the Via Condotti, in the Piazza di Spagna.

the vacant guard-rooms and deserted lobbies" of our hostelry, and the snow descended in a heavy fall, and covered the valleys; but Radicofani looked the same, as we saw it through the coach-windows the next morning, old, grey, deserted, gloomy, as if it had survived "a thousand storms, a thousand winters" —the peasant still crawled along its trenches, the traveller stopped to gaze at its battlements—but neither spear nor battle-axe would glitter there again, nor banner be spread, nor the clash of arms be heard in the round of ever-rolling years—it looked back to other times as we looked back upon it, and stood towering in its decay, and nodding to an eternal repose! The road in this, as in other parts of Italy, is evidently calculated, and was originally constructed, for the march of an army. Instead of creeping along the valleys, it passes along the ridges of hills to prevent surprise, or watch the movements of an enemy, and thus generally commands an extensive view of the country, such as it is. It was long before winding slowly into the valley, we lost sight of our last night's station.

Aquapendente is situated on the brow of a hill, over a running stream, as its name indicates, and the ascent to it is up the side of a steep rugged ravine, with overhanging rocks and shrubs. The mixture of wildness and luxuriance answered to my idea of Italian scenery, but I had seen little of it hitherto. The town is old, dirty, and disagreeable; and we were driven to an inn in one of the bye-streets, where there

was but one sitting-room, which was occupied by an English family, who were going to leave it immediately, but who, I suppose, on hearing that some one else was waiting for it, claimed the right of keeping it as long as they pleased. The assertion of an abstract right is the idea uppermost in the minds of all English people. Unfortunately, when its attainment is worth any thing, their spirit of contradiction makes them ready to relinquish it; or when it costs them any thing, their spirit of self-interest deters them from the pursuit! After waiting some time, we at last breakfasted in a sort of kitchen or outhouse upstairs, where we had very excellent but homely fare, and where we were amused with the furniture—a dove-house, a kid, half-skinned, hanging on the walls; a loose heap of macaroni and vegetables in one corner, plenty of smoke, a Madonna carved and painted, and a map of Constantinople. The pigeons on the floor were busy with their murmuring plaints, and often fluttered their wings as if to fly. So, thought I, the nations of the earth clap their wings, and strive in vain to be free! The landlady was a woman about forty, diminutive and sickly, but with one of those pale, mild, penetrating faces which one seldom sees out of Italy. She was the mother of two buxom daughters, as coarse and hard as any thing of the kind one might meet with in Herefordshire or Gloucestershire!—The road from Aquapendente is of a deep heavy soil, over which the horses with difficulty dragged the carriage. The

view on one side was bounded by two fine conical hills clothed to the very top with thick woods of beech and fir; and our route lay for miles over an undulating ground covered with the wild broom (growing to the size of a large shrub), among which herds of slate-coloured oxen were seen browzing luxuriously. The broom floated above them, their covering and their food, with its flexible silken branches of light green, and presented an eastern scene, extensive, soft and wild. We passed, I think, but one habitation between Aquapendente and San Lorenzo, and met but one human being, which was a *Gend'Armes!* I asked our Vetturino if this dreary aspect of the country was the effect of nature or of art. He pulled a handful of earth from the hedge-side, and shewed a rich black loam, capable of every improvement. I asked in whose dominions we were, and received for answer, "In the Pope's." San Lorenzo is a town built on the summit of a hill, in consequence of the ravages of the *malaria* in the old town, situated in the valley below. It looks like a large alms-house, or else like a town that has run away from the plague and itself, and stops suddenly on the brow of a hill to see if the Devil is following it. The ruins below are the most ghastly I ever saw. The scattered fragments of walls and houses are crumbling away like rotten bones, and there are holes in the walls and subterraneous passages, in which disease, like an ugly witch, seems to lurk and to forbid your entrance. Further on, and

winding round the edge of the lake, you come to Bolsena. The unwholesome nature of the air from the water may be judged of from the colour of the tops of the houses, the moss on which is as yellow as the jaundice, and the grass and corn-fields on its borders are of a tawny green. The road between this and Monte-Fiascone, which you see on an eminence before you, lies through a range of gloomy defiles, and is deformed by the blackened corses of huge oak-trees, that strew the road-side, the unsightly relics of fine old woods that were cut down and half-burnt a few years ago as the haunts of bands of robbers. They plant morals in this country by rooting up trees! While the country is worth seeing, it is not safe to travel; but picturesque beauty must, of course, give place to the police. I thought, when I first saw these cadaverous trunks lying by the side of the lake, that they were the useless remains of cargoes of timber that we had purchased of the Holy See to fight its battles, and maintain the cause of social order in every part of the world! Let no English traveller stop at Monte-Fiascone (I mean at the inn outside the town), unless he would be starved and smoke-dried, but pass on to Viterbo, which is a handsome town, with the best inn on the road. You pass one night more on the road in this mode of travelling (which resembles walking a minuet, rather than striking up a country dance) at Ronciglione; and the next day from Baccano, you see rising up, in a flat, hazy plain, the dome of

St. Peter's. You proceed for some miles along a gradual descent without any object of much interest, pass the Tiber and the gate *Del Popolo*, and you are in Rome. When there, go any where but to Franks's Hotel, and get a lodging, if possible, on the Via Gregoriana, which overlooks the town, and where you can feast the eye and indulge in sentiment, without being poisoned by bad air. The house of Salvator Rosa is at present let out in lodgings. I have now lived twice in houses occupied by celebrated men, once in a house that had belonged to Milton, and now in this, and find to my mortification that imagination is entirely a *thing imaginary*, and has nothing to do with matter of fact, history, or the senses. To see an object of thought or fancy is just as impossible as to feel a sound or hear a smell.

CHAPTER XIX.

"As London is to the meanest country town, so is Rome to every other city in the world."

So said an old friend of mine, and I believed him till I saw it. This is not the Rome I expected to see. No one from being in it would know he was in the place that had been twice mistress of the world. I do not understand how Nicolas Poussin could tell, taking up a handful of earth, that it was "a part of the ETERNAL CITY." In Oxford an air of learning breathes from the very walls: halls and colleges meet your eye in every direction; you cannot for a moment forget where you are. In London there is a look of wealth and populousness which is to be found nowhere else. In Rome you are for the most part lost in a mass of tawdry, fulsome *common-places*. It is not the contrast of pig-styes and palaces that I complain of, the distinction between the old and new; what I object to is the want of any such striking contrast, but an almost uninterrupted succession of narrow, vulgar-looking streets, where the smell of garlick prevails over the odour of antiquity, with the dingy, melancholy flat fronts of modern-built houses, that seem in search of an owner. A dunghill, an outhouse, the weeds grow-

ing under an imperial arch offend me not; but what has a green-grocer's stall, a stupid English china warehouse, a putrid *trattoria*, a barber's sign, an old clothes or old picture shop or a Gothic palace, with two or three lacqueys in modern liveries lounging at the gate, to do with ancient Rome? No! this is not the wall that Romulus leaped over: this is not the Capitol where Julius Cæsar fell: instead of standing on seven hills, it is situated in a low valley: the golden Tiber is a muddy stream: St. Peter's is not equal to St. Paul's: the Vatican falls short of the Louvre, as it was in my time; but I thought that here were works immoveable, immortal, inimitable on earth, and lifting the soul half way to heaven. I find them not, or only what I had seen before in different ways: the Stanzas of Raphael are faded, or no better than the prints; and the mind of Michael Angelo's figures, of which no traces are to be found in the copies, is equally absent from the walls of the Sistine Chapel. Rome is great only in ruins: the Coliseum, the Pantheon, the Arch of Constantine fully answered my expectations; and an air breathes round her stately avenues, serene, blissful, like the mingled breath of spring and winter, betwixt life and death, betwixt hope and despair. The country about Rome is cheerless and barren. There is little verdure, nor are any trees planted, on account of their bad effects on the air. Happy climate! in which shade and sunshine are alike fatal. The Jews (I may add while I think of it) are shut up here in a quarter by themselves. I see no reason

for it. It is a distinction not worth the making. There was a talk (it being *Anno Santo*) of shutting them up for the whole of the present year. A soldier stands at the gate, to tell you that this is the Jews' quarter, and to take any thing you choose to give him for this piece of Christian information. A Catholic church stands outside their prison, with a Crucifixion painted on it as a frontispiece, where they are obliged to hear a sermon in behalf of the truth of the Christian religion every Good Friday. On the same day they used to make them run races in the Corso, for the amusement of the rabble (high and low)—now they are compelled to provide horses for the same purpose. Owing to the politeness of the age, they no longer burn them as of yore, and that is something. Religious zeal, like all other things, grows old and feeble. They treat the Jews in this manner at Rome (as a local courtesy to St. Peter), and yet they compliment *us* on our increasing liberality to the Irish Catholics. The Protestant chapel here stands outside the walls, while there is a British monument to the memory of the Stuarts, inside of St. Peter's; the tombs in the English burying-ground were destroyed and defaced not long ago; yet this did not prevent the Prince Regent from exchanging portraits with the Pope and his Ministers!—"Oh! liberalism—lovely liberalism!" as Mr. Blackwood would say.

From the window of the house where I lodge, I have a view of the whole city at once: nay, I can see

St. Peter's as I lie in bed of a morning. The town is an immense mass of solid stone-buildings, streets, palaces, and churches; but it has not the beauty of the environs of Florence, nor the splendid background of Turin, nor does it present any highly picturesque or commanding points of view like Edinburgh. The pleasantest walks I know are round the Via Sistina, and along the Via di Quattro-Fontane—they overlook Rome from the North-East on to the churches of Santa Maria Maggiore, and of St. John Lateran, towards the gate leading to Naples. As we loiter on, our attention was caught by an open greensward to the left, with foot-paths, and a ruined wall and gardens on each side. A carriage stood in the road just by, and a gentleman and lady, with a little child, had got out of it to walk. A soldier and a girl were seen talking together further on, and a herd of cattle were feeding at their leisure on the yielding turf. The day was close and dry—not a breath stirred. All was calm and silent. It had been cold when we set out, but here the air was soft—of an Elysian temperature, as if the winds did not dare to visit the sanctuaries of the dead too roughly. The daisy sprung beneath our feet—the fruit-trees blossomed within the nodding arches. On one side were seen the hills of Albano, on the other the Claudian gate; and close by was Nero's Golden House, where there were seventy thousand statues and pillars, of marble and of silver, and where senates kneeled, and myriads shouted in honour of a frail mortal, as of a God.

Come here, oh man! and worship thine own spirit, that can hoard up, as in a shrine, the treasures of two thousand years, and can create out of the memory of fallen splendours and departed grandeur a solitude deeper than that of desert wildernesses, and pour from the outgoings of thine own thoughts a thunder louder than that of maddening multitudes! No place was ever so still as this; for none was ever the scene of such pomp and triumph! Not far from this are the Baths of Titus; the grass and the poppy (the flower of oblivion) grow over them, and in the vaults below they shew you (by the help of a torch) paintings on the ceiling eighteen hundred years old, birds, and animals, a figure of a slave, a nymph and a huntsman, fresh and elegantly foreshortened, and also the place where the Laocoon was discovered. A few paces off is the Coliseum, or Amphitheatre of Titus, the noblest ruin in Rome. It is circular, built of red stone and brick, with arched windows, and the gillyflower and fennel growing on its walls to the very top: one side is nearly perfect. As you pass under it, it seems to raise itself above you, and mingle with the sky in its majestic simplicity, as if earth were a thing too gross for it; it stands almost unconscious of decay, and may still stand for ages—though Mr. Hobhouse has written Annotations upon it! There is a hypocritical inscription on it, to say that it has been kept in repair by the Popes, in order to preserve the memory of the martyrs that suffered here in cruel combats with wild beasts. As I have alluded to this sub-

ject, I will add that I think the finest stanza in Lord Byron is that where he describes the *Dying Gladiator*, who falls and does not hear the shout of barbarous triumph echoing from these very walls:—

> "He hears it not; his thoughts are far away,
> Where his rude hut beside the Danube lay;
> There are his young barbarians, all at play,
> They and their Dacian mother; he their sire
> Is doom'd to make a Roman holiday.
> When will ye rise, ye Goths? awake and glut your ire!"
>
> CHILDE HAROLD.

The temple of Vesta is on the Tiber. It is not unlike an hour-glass—or a toad-stool; it is small, but exceedingly beautiful, and has a look of great antiquity. The Pantheon is also as fine as possible. It has the most perfect unity of effect. It was hardly a proper receptacle for the Gods of the Heathens, for it has a simplicity and grandeur like the vaulted cope of Heaven. Compared with these admired remains of former times I must say that the more modern churches and palaces in Rome are poor, flashy, upstart-looking things. Even the dome of St. Peter's is for the most part hid by the front, and the Vatican has no business by its side. The sculptures there are also indifferent, and the mosaics, except two—the Transfiguration and St. Jerome, ill chosen. I was lucky enough to see the Pope here on Easter Sunday. He seems a harmless, infirm, fretful old man. I confess I should feel little ambition to be at the head of a procession, at which the

ignorant stare, the better informed smile. I was also lucky enough to see St. Peter's illuminated to the very top (a project of Michael Angelo's) in the evening. It was finest at first, as the kindled lights blended with the fading twilight. It seemed doubtful whether it were an artificial illumination, the work of carpenters and torch-bearers, or the reflection of an invisible sun. One half of the cross shone with the richest gold, and rows of lamps gave light as from a sky. At length a shower of fairy lights burst out at a signal in all directions, and covered the whole building. It looked better at a distance than when we went nearer it. It continued blazing all night. What an effect it must have upon the country round! Now and then a life or so is lost in lighting up the huge fabric, but what is this to the glory of the church and the salvation of souls, to which it no doubt tends? I can easily conceive some of the wild groups that I saw in the streets the following day to have been led by delight and wonder from their mountain-haunts, or even from the bandits' cave, to worship at this new starry glory, rising from the earth. The whole of the immense space before St. Peter's was in the afternoon crowded with people to see the Pope give his benediction. The rich dresses of the country people, the strong features and orderly behaviour of all, gave this assemblage a decided superiority over any thing of the kind I had seen in England. I did not hear the *Miserere* which is chaunted by the Priests, and sung by a single voice (I under-

stand like an angel's) in a dim religious light in the Sistine Chapel; nor did I see the exhibition of the relics, at which I was told all the beauty of Rome was present. It is something even to miss such things. After all, St. Peter's does not seem to me the chief boast or most imposing display of the Catholic religion. Old Melrose Abbey, battered to pieces and in ruins, as it is, impresses me much more than the collective pride and pomp of Michael Angelo's great work. Popery is here at home, and may strut and swell and deck itself out as it pleases, on the spot and for the occasion. It is the pageant of an hour. But to stretch out its arm fifteen hundred miles, to create a voice in the wilderness, to have left its monuments standing by the Teviot-side, or to send the midnight hymn through the shades of Vallombrosa, or to make it echo among Alpine solitudes, that is faith, and that is power. The rest is a puppet-shew! I am no admirer of Pontificals, but I am a slave to the picturesque. The Priests talking together in St. Peter's, or the common people kneeling at the altars, make groups that shame all art. The inhabitants of the city have something French about them—something of the cook's and the milliner's shop—something pert, gross, and cunning; but the Roman peasants redeem the credit of their golden sky. The young women that come here from Gensano and Albano, and that are known by their scarlet boddices and white head-dresses and handsome good-humoured faces, are the finest specimens I have ever seen of

human nature. They are like creatures that have breathed the air of Heaven, till the sun has ripened them into perfect beauty, health, and goodness. They are universally admired in Rome. The English women that you see, though pretty, are pieces of dough to them. Little troops and whole families, men, women, and children, from the Campagna and neighbouring districts of Rome, throng the streets during Easter and Lent, who come to visit the shrine of some favourite Saint, repeating their *Aves* aloud, and telling their beads with all the earnestness imaginable. Popery is no farce to them. They surely think St. Peter's is the way to Heaven. You even see priests counting their beads, and looking grave. If they can contrive to get possession of this world for themselves, and give the laity the reversion of the next, were it only in imagination, something is to be said for the exchange. I only hate half-way houses in religion or politics, that take from us all the benefits of ignorance and superstition, and give us none of the advantages of liberty or philosophy in return. Thus I hate Princes who usurp the thrones of others, and would almost give them back, sooner than allow the rights of the people. Once more, how does that monument to the Stuarts happen to be stuck up in the side-aisle of St. Peter's? I would ask the person who placed it there, how many Georges there have been since James III.? His ancestor makes but an ambiguous figure beside the posthumous group—

"So sit two Kings of Brentford on one throne!"

The only thing unpleasant in the motley assemblage of persons at Rome, is the number of pilgrims with their greasy oil-skin cloaks. They are a dirty, disgusting set, with a look of sturdy hypocrisy about them. The Pope (*pro formâ*) washes their feet; the Nuns, when they come, have even a less delicate office to perform. Religion, in the depth of its humility, ought not to forget decorum. But I am a traveller, and not a reformer.

The picture-galleries in Rome disappointed me quite. I was told there were a dozen at least, equal to the Louvre; there is not one. I shall not dwell long upon them, for they gave me little pleasure. At the Ruspigliosi Palace (near the Monte Cavallo, where are the famous Colossal groups, said to be by Phidias and Praxiteles, of one of which we have a cast in Hyde Park) are the Aurora and the Andromeda, by Guido. The first is a most splendid composition (like the Daughter of the Dawn) but painted in fresco; and the artist has, in my mind, failed through want of practice in the grace and colouring of most of the figures. They are a clumsy, gloomy-looking set, and not like Guido's females. The Andromeda has all the charm and sweetness of his pencil, in its pearly tones, its graceful timid action, and its lovely expression of gentleness and terror. The face, every part of the figure, has a beauty and softness not to be described. This one figure is worth all the other

group, and the Apollo, the horses and the azure sea to boot. People talk of the insipidity of Guido. Oh! let me drink long, repeated, relishing draughts of such insipidity! If delicacy, beauty, and grace are insipidity, I too profess myself an idolizer of insipidity: I will venture one assertion, which is, that no other painter has expressed the female character so well, so truly, so entirely in its fragile, lovely essence, neither Raphael, nor Titian, nor Correggio; and, after these, it is needless to mention any more. Raphael's women are Saints; Titian's are courtesans; Correggio's an affected mixture of both; Guido's are the true heroines of romance, the brides of the fancy, such as "youthful poets dream of when they love," or as a Clarissa, a Julia de Roubigne, or a Miss Milner would turn out to be! They are not only angels, but young ladies into the bargain, which is more than can be said for any of the others, and yet it is something to say. Vandyke sometimes gave this effect in portrait, but his historical figures are fanciful and sprawling. Under the Andromeda is a portrait by Nicolas Poussin of himself (a duplicate of that in the Louvre), and an infant Cupid or Bacchus, by the same artist, finely coloured, and executed in the manner of Titian. There is in another room an unmeaning picture, by Annibal Caracci, of Samson pulling down the temple of the Philistines, and also a fine dead Christ by him; add to these a Diana and Endymion by Guercino, in which the real sentiment

of the story is thrown into the landscape and figures. The Ruspigliose Pavilion, containing these and some inferior pictures, is situated near the remains of Constantine's Bath in a small raised garden or terrace, in which the early violets and hyacinths blossom amidst broken cisterns and defaced statues. It is a pretty picture; art decays, but nature still survives through all changes. At the Doria Palace, there is nothing remarkable but the two Claudes, and these are much injured in colour. The trees are black, and the water looks like lead. There are several Garofolos, which are held in esteem here (not unjustly) and one fine head by Titian. The Velasquez (Innocent X.), so much esteemed by Sir Joshua, is a spirited sketch. The Borghese Palace has three fine pictures, and only three—the Diana and Actæon of Domenichino; the Taking down from the Cross, by Raphael; and Titian's Sacred and Profane Love. This last picture has a peculiar and inexpressible charm about it. It is something between portrait and allegory, a mixture of history and landscape, simple and yet quaint, fantastical yet without meaning to be so, but as if a sudden thought had struck the painter, and he could not help attempting to execute it out of curiosity, and finishing it from the delight it gave him. It is full of sweetness and solemnity. The Diana of Domenichino is just the reverse of it. Every thing here is arranged methodically, and is the effect of study and forethought. Domenichino was a painter of

sense, feeling, and taste; but his pencil was meagre, and his imagination dispirited and impoverished. In Titian, the execution surpassed the design, and the force of his hand and eye, as he went on, enriched the most indifferent outline: in Domenichino, the filling up fell short of the conception and of his own wishes. He was a man of great modesty and merit; and when others expressed an admiration of his talents, they were obliged to reckon up a number of his *chef-d'œuvres* to convince him that they were in earnest. He could hardly believe that any one else thought much of his works, when he thought so little of them himself. Raphael's Taking down from the Cross is in his early manner, and the outlines of the limbs are like the edges of plates of tin; but it has what was inseparable from his productions, first and last, pregnant expression and careful drawing. I ought to mention that there is, by the same master-hand, a splendid portrait of Cæsar Borgia, which is an addition to my list. The complexion is a strange mixture of orange and purple. The hair of his sister, Lucretia Borgia (the friend and mistress of Cardinal Bembo) is still preserved in Italy, and a lock of it was in the possession of Lord Byron. I lately saw it in company with that of Milton and of Bonaparte, looking calm, golden, beautiful, a smiling trophy from the grave! The number and progressive improvement of Raphael's works in Italy is striking. It might teach our holiday artists that to do well is to do much.

Excellence springs up behind us, not before us; and is the result of what we have done, not of what we intend to do. Many artists (especially those abroad, who are distracted with a variety of styles and models) never advance beyond the contemplation of some great work, and think to lay in an unexampled store of accomplishments, before they commence any undertaking. That is where they ought to end; to begin with it is too much. It is as if the foundation-stone should form the cupola of St. Peter's. Great works are the result of much labour and of many failures, and not of pompous pretensions and fastidious delicacy.

The Corsini pictures are another large and very indifferent collection. All I can recollect worth mentioning are, a very sweet and silvery-toned Herodias, by Guido; a fine landscape, by Gaspar Poüssin; an excellent sketch from Ariosto of the Giant Orgagna; and the Plague of Milan by a modern artist, a work of great invention and judgment, and in which the details of the subject are so managed as to affect, and not to shock. The Campidoglio collection is better. There is a large and admirable Guercino, an airy and richly-coloured Guido, some capital little Garafolos, a beautiful copy of a Repose of Titian's by Pietro da Cortona, several Giorgiones, and a number of antique busts of the most interesting description. Here is the bronze She-Wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus, and the Geese that cackled in the Capitol. I find nothing so delightful as these

old Roman heads of Senators, Warriors, Philosophers. They have all the freshness of truth and nature. They shew something substantial in mortality. They are the only things that do not crush and overturn our sense of personal identity; and are a fine relief to the mouldering relics of antiquity, and to the momentary littleness of modern things! The Little Farnese contains the Galatea and the Cupid and Psyche. If any thing could have raised my idea of Raphael higher, it would have been some of these frescoes. I would mention the group of the Graces in particular; they are true Goddesses. The fine flowing outline of the limbs, the variety of attitudes, the unconscious grace, the charming unaffected glow of the expression, are inimitable. Raphael never perhaps escaped so completely from the trammels of his first manner, as in this noble series of designs. The Galatea has been injured in colour by the stoves which the Germans, who were quartered there, lighted in the apartment. In the same room is the famous chalk head, said to have been sketched upon the wall by Michael Angelo. The story is probably a fabrication; the head is as coarse and mechanical as any thing can be. Raphael's Loggia in the corridors of the Vatican (the subjects of what is called his Bible) appear to me divine in form, relief, conception—above all, the figure of Eve at the forbidden tree; his Stanzas there appear to me divine, more particularly the Heliodorus, the School of Athens, and the Miracle of Bolseno, with

all the truth and force of character of Titian's portraits (I see nothing, however, of his colouring) and his own purity, sweetness, and lofty invention, added to them. His oil pictures there are divine. The Transfiguration is a wonderful collection of fine heads and figures: their fault is, that they are too detached and bare, but it is not true that it embraces two distinct points of time. The event below is going on in the Gospel account, at the same time with the miracle of the Transfiguration above. But I almost prefer to this the Foligno picture: the child with the casket below is of all things the most Raphaelesque, for the sweetness of expression, and the rich pulpy texture of the flesh; and perhaps I prefer even to this the Crowning of the Virgin, with that pure dignified figure of the Madonna sitting in the clouds, and that wonderous emanation of sentiment in the crowd below, near the vase of flowers, all whose faces are bathed in one feeling of ecstatic devotion, as the stream of inspiration flows over them. There is a singular effect of colouring in the lower part of this picture, as if it were painted on slate, and from this cold chilly ground the glow of sentiment comes out perhaps the more strong and effectual. In the same suite of apartments (accessible to students and copyists) are the Death of St. Jerome, by Domenichino; and the Vision of St. Romuald, by Andrea Sacchi, the last of the Italian painters. Five nobler or more impressive pictures are not in the world. A single figure of St.

Michelle (as a pilgrim among the Alps) is a pure rich offering of the pencil to legendary devotion, and remarkable for the simplicity of the colouring, sweetness of the expression, and the gloomy splendour of the background. There are no others equally good. The Vatican contains numberless fine statues and other remains of antiquity, elegant and curious. The Apollo I do not admire, but the Laocoon appears to me admirable, for the workmanship, for the muscular contortions of the father's figure, and the divine expression of the sentiment of pain and terror in the children. They are, however, rather small than young. Canova's figures here seem to me the work of an accomplished sculptor, but not of a great man. Michael Angelo's figures of Day and Night, at the Chapel of St. Lorenzo at Florence, are those of a great man; whether of a perfect sculptor or not, I will not pretend to say. The neck of the Night is curved like the horse's, the limbs have the involution of serpents. These two figures and his transporting the Pantheon to the top of St. Peter's, have settled my wavering idea of this mighty genius, which his David and early works at Florence had staggered. His Adam receiving life from his Creator, in the Sistine Chapel, for boldness and freedom, is more like the Elgin Theseus than any other figure I have seen. The Jeremiah in the same cieling droops and bows the head like a willow-tree surcharged with showers. Whether there are any faces worthy of these noble

figures I have not been near enough to see. Those near the bottom of the Last Judgment are hideous, vulgar caricatures of demons and cardinals, and the whole is a mass of extravagance and confusion. I shall endeavour to get a nearer view of the Prophets and Sybils in the Capella Sistina. And if I can discover an expression and character of thought in them equal to their grandeur of form, I shall not be slow to acknowledge it. Michael Angelo is one of those names that cannot be shaken without pulling down Fame itself. The Vatican is rich in pictures, statuary, tapestry, gardens, and in the views from it; but its immense size is divided into too many long and narrow compartments, and it wants the unity of effect and imposing gravity of the Louvre.

CHAPTER XX.

THERE are two things that an Englishman understands, hard words and hard blows. Nothing short of this (generally speaking) excites his attention or interests him in the least. His neighbours have the benefit of the one in war time, and his own countrymen of the other in time of peace. The French express themselves astonished at the feats which our Jack Tars have so often performed. A fellow in that class of life in England will strike his hand through a deal board—first, to shew his strength, which he is proud of; secondly, to give him a sensation, which he is in want of; lastly to prove his powers of endurance, which he also makes a boast of. So qualified, a controversy with a cannon-ball is not much out of his way: a thirty-two pounder is rather an *ugly customer*, but it presents him with a tangible idea (a thing he is always in search of)—and, should it take off his head or carry away one of his limbs, he does not feel the want of the one or care for that of the other. Naturally obtuse, his feelings become hardened by custom; or if there are any qualms of repugnance or dismay left, a volley of oaths, a few coarse jests, and a double allowance of grog soon turn the

affair into a pastime. Stung with wounds, stunned with bruises, bleeding and mangled, an English sailor never finds himself so much alive as when he is flung half dead into the cockpit; for he then perceives the extreme consciousness of his existence in his conflict with external matter, in the violence of his will, and his obstinate contempt for suffering. He feels his personal identity on the side of the disagreeable and repulsive; and it is better to feel it so than to be a stock or a stone, which is his ordinary state. Pain puts life into him; action, soul: otherwise, he is a mere log. The English are not like a nation of women. They are not thin-skinned, nervous, or effeminate, but dull and morbid: they look danger and difficulty in the face, and shake hands with death as with a brother. They do not hold up their heads, but they will turn their backs on no man: they delight in doing and in bearing more than others: what every one else shrinks from through aversion to labour or pain, they are attracted to, and go through with, and so far (and so far only) they are a great people. At least, it cannot be denied that they are a *pugnacious* set. Their heads are so full of this, that if a Frenchman speaks of SCREIB, the celebrated farce-writer, a young Englishman present will suppose he means CRIBB the boxer; and ten thousand people assembled at a prize-fight will witness an exhibition of pugilism with the same breathless attention and delight as the audience at the *Théatre Français* listen

to the dialogue of Racine or Moliere. Assuredly, *we* do not pay the same attention to Shakspeare: but at a boxing-match every Englishman feels his power to give and take blows increased by sympathy, as at a French theatre every spectator fancies that the actors on the stage talk, laugh, and make love as he would. A metaphysician might say, that the English perceive objects chiefly by their mere material qualities of solidity, inertness, and impenetrability, or by their own muscular resistance to them; that they do not care about the colour, taste, smell, the sense of luxury or pleasure:—they require the heavy, hard, and tangible only, something for them to grapple with and resist, to try their strength and their unimpressibility upon. They do not like to smell to a rose, or to taste of made-dishes, or to listen to soft music, or to look at fine pictures, or to make or hear fine speeches, or to enjoy themselves or amuse others; but they will knock any man down who tells them so, and their sole delight is to be as uncomfortable and disagreeable as possible. To them the greatest labour is to be pleased: they hate to have nothing to find fault with: to expect them to smile or to converse on equal terms, is the heaviest tax you can levy on their want of animal spirits or intellectual resources. A drop of pleasure is the most difficult thing to extract from their hard, dry, mechanical, husky frame; a civil word or look is the last thing they can part with. Hence the *matter-of-factness* of their under-

standings, their tenaciousness of reason or prejudice, their slowness to distinguish, their backwardness to yield, their mechanical improvements, their industry, their courage, their blunt honesty, their dislike to the frivolous and florid, their love of liberty out of hatred to oppression, and their love of virtue from their antipathy to vice. Hence also their philosophy, from their distrust of appearances and unwillingness to be imposed upon; and even their poetry has its probable source in the same repining, discontented humour, which flings them from cross-grained realities into the region of lofty and eager imaginations*.—A French gentleman, a man of sense and wit, expressed his wonder that all the English did not go and live in the

* We have five names unrivalled in modern times and in their different ways:—Newton, Locke, Bacon, Shakspeare, and Milton—and if to these we were to add a sixth that could not be questioned in his line, perhaps it would be Hogarth. Our wit is the effect not of gaiety, but spleen—the last result of a pertinacious *reductio ad absurdum*. Our greatest wits have been our gravest men. Fielding seems to have produced his *History of a Foundling* with the same deliberation and forethought that Arkwright did his spinning-jenny. The French have no poetry; that is, no combination of internal feeling with external imagery. Their dramatic dialogue is frothy verbiage or a mucilage of sentiment without natural bones or substance: ours constantly clings to the concrete, and has a *purchase* upon matter. Outward objects interfere with and extinguish the flame of their imagination: with us they are the fuel that kindle it into a brighter and stronger blaze.

South of France, where they would have a beautiful country, a fine climate, and every comfort almost for nothing. He did not perceive that they would go back in shoals from this scene of fancied contentment to their fogs and sea-coal fires, and that no Englishman can live without something to complain of. Some persons are sorry to see our countrymen abroad cheated, laughed at, quarrelling at all the inns they stop at:—while they are in *hot water*, while they think themselves ill-used and have but the spirit to resent it, they are happy. As long as they can swear, they are excused from being complimentary: if they have to fight, they need not think: while they are provoked beyond measure, they are released from the dreadful obligation of being pleased. Leave them to themselves, and they are dull: introduce them into company, and they are worse. It is the incapacity of enjoyment that makes them sullen and ridiculous; the mortification they feel at not having their own way in everything, and at seeing others delighted without asking their leave, that makes them haughty and distant. An Englishman is silent abroad from having nothing to say; and he looks stupid, because he is so. It is kind words and graceful acts that afflict his soul—an appearance of happiness, which he suspects to be insincere because he cannot enter into it, and a flow of animal spirits which dejects him the more from making him feel the want of it in himself; pictures that he does not understand, music that he does not feel, love

that he cannot make, suns that shine out of England, and smiles more radiant than they! Do not stifle him with roses; do not kill him with kindness: leave him some pretext to grumble, to fret, and torment himself. Point at him as he drives an English mail-coach about the streets of Paris or of Rome, to relieve his despair of *éclat* by affording him a pretence to horsewhip some one. Be disagreeable, surly, lying, knavish, impertinent out of compassion; insult, rob him, and he will thank you; take any thing from him (nay even his life) sooner than his opinion of himself and his prejudices against others, his moody dissatisfaction and his contempt for every one who is not in as ill a humour as he is.

John Bull is certainly a singular animal. It is the being the beast he is that has made a man of him. If he do not take care what he is about, the same ungoverned humour will be his ruin. He must have something to butt at; and it matters little to him whether it be friend or foe, provided only he can *run-a-muck*. He must have a grievance to solace him, a bug-bear of some sort or other to keep himself in breath: otherwise, he droops and hangs the head—he is no longer John Bull, but John Ox, according to a happy allusion of the Poet-Laureate's. This necessity of John's to be repulsive (right or wrong) has been lately turned against himself, to the detriment of others, and his proper cost. Formerly, the Pope, the Devil, the Inquisition, and the Bourbons, served

the turn, with all of whom he is at present sworn friends, unless Mr. Canning should throw out a *tub to a whale* in South America: then Bonaparte took the lead for awhile in John's panic-struck brain; and latterly, the Whigs and the *Examiner* newspaper have borne the bell before all other topics of abuse and obloquy. Formerly, liberty was the word with John,—now it has become a bye-word. Whoever is not determined to make a slave and a drudge of him, he defies, he sets at, he tosses in the air, he tramples under foot; and after having mangled and crushed whom he pleases, stands stupid and melancholy *(fœnum in cornu)* over the lifeless remains of his victim. When his fury is over, he repents of what he has done—too late. In his tame fit, and having made a clear stage of all who would or could direct him right, he is led gently by the nose by Mr. Croker; and the "Stout Gentleman" gets upon his back, making a monster of him. Why is there a tablet stuck up in St. Peter's at Rome, to the memory of the three last of the Stuarts? Is it a *baisés-mains* to the Pope, or a compromise with legitimacy? Is the dread of usurpation become so strong, that a reigning family are half-ready to acknowledge themselves usurpers, in favour of those who are not likely to come back to assert their claim, and to countenance the principles that may keep them on a throne, in lieu of the paradoxes that placed them there? It is a handsome way of paying for a kingdom

with an epitaph, and of satisfying the pretensions of the living and the dead. But we did not expel the slavish and tyrannical Stuarts from our soil by the volcanic eruption of 1688, to send a whining Jesuitical recantation and *writ of error* after them to the other world a hundred years afterwards. But it may be said that the inscription is merely a tribute of respect to misfortune. What! from that quarter? No! it is a "lily-livered," polished, courtly, pious monument to the fears that have so long beset the hearts of Monarchs, to the pale apparitions of Kings dethroned or beheaded in time past or to come (from that sad example) to the crimson flush of victory, which has put out the light of truth, and to the reviving hope of that deathless night of ignorance and superstition, when they shall once more reign as Gods upon the earth, and make of their enemies their foot-stool! Foreigners cannot comprehend this bear-garden work of ours at all: they "perceive a fury, but nothing wherefore." They cannot reconcile the violence of our wills with the dulness of our apprehensions, nor account for the fuss we make about nothing; our convulsions and throes without end or object, the pains we take to defeat ourselves and others, and to undo all that we have ever done, sooner than any one else should share the benefit of it. They think it is strange, that out of mere perversity and contradiction we would rather be slaves ourselves, than suffer others to be free; that we *back* out of our most

heroic acts and disavow our favourite maxims (the blood-stained devices in our national coat of arms) the moment we find others disposed to assent to or imitate us, and that we would willingly see the last hope of liberty and independence extinguished, sooner than give the smallest credit to those who sacrifice every thing to keep the spark alive, or abstain from joining in every species of scurrility, insult, aud calumny against them, if the word is once given by the whippers-in of power. The English imagination is not *riante:* it inclines to the gloomy and morbid with a heavy instinctive bias, and when fear and interest are thrown into the scale, down it goes with a vengeance that is not to be resisted, and from the effects of which it is not easy to recover. The enemies of English liberty are aware of this weakness in the public mind, and make a notable use of it.

> "But that two-handed engine at the door
> Stands ready to smite once and smite no more."

Give a dog an ill name, and hang him—so says the proverb. The courtiers say, "Give a *patriot* an ill name, and ruin him" alike with Whig and Tory—with the last, because he hates you as a friend to freedom; with the first, because he is afraid of being implicated in the same obloquy with you. This is the reason why the Magdalen Muse of Mr. Thomas Moore finds a taint in the *Liberal;* why Mr. Hobhouse visits Pisa, to dissuade Lord Byron from connecting himself with any but gentlemen-born, for

the credit of the popular cause. Set about a false report or insinuation, and the effect is instantaneous and universally felt—prove that there is nothing in it, and you are just where you were. Something wrong somewhere, in reality or imagination, in public or in private, is necessary to the minds of the English people: bring a charge against any one, and they hug you to their breasts: attempt to take it from them, and they resist it as they would an attack upon their persons or property: a nickname is to their moody, splenetic humour a freehold estate, from which they will not be ejected by fair means or foul: they conceive they have a *vested right* in calumny. No matter how base the lie, how senseless the jest, it *tells*—because the public appetite greedily swallows whatever is nauseous and disgusting, and refuses, through weakness or obstinacy, to disgorge it again. Therefore Mr. Croker plies his dirty task—and is a Privy-councillor; Mr. Theodore Hook calls Mr. Waithman "Lord Waithman" once a week, and passes for a wit!

I had the good fortune to meet the other day at Paris with my old fellow-student Dr. E——, after a lapse of thirty years; he is older than I by a year or two, and makes it five-and-twenty. He had not been idle since we parted. He sometimes looked in, after having paid La Place a visit; and I told him it was almost as if he had called on a star in his way. It is wonderful how friendship, that has long lain

unused, accumulates like money at compound interest. We had to settle a long account, and to compare old times and new. He was naturally anxious to learn the state of our politics and literature, and was not a little mortified to hear that England, "whose boast it was to give out reformation to the world," had changed her motto, and was now bent on propping up the continental despotisms, and on lashing herself to them. He was particularly mortified at the degraded state of our public press—at the systematic organization of a corps of government-critics to decry every liberal sentiment, and proscribe every liberal writer as an enemy to the person of the reigning sovereign, only because he did not avow the principles of the Stuarts. I had some difficulty in making him understand the full lengths of the malice, the lying, the hypocrisy, the sleek adulation, the meanness, equivocation, and skulking concealment, of a *Quarterly Reviewer*,* the reckless blackguardism of *Mr. Blackwood*, and the obtuse drivelling profligacy

* A Mr. Law lately came over from America to horsewhip the writer of an article in the *Quarterly*, reflecting on his mother (Mrs. Law) as a woman of bad character, for the Tory reason that she was the wife of a Mr. Law, who differed with his brother (Lord Ellenborough) in politics. He called on Mr. Barrow, who knew nothing of the writer; he called on Mr. Gifford, who knew nothing of the writer; he called on Mr. Murray, who looked oddly, but he could get no redress except a public disavowal of the falsehood; and they took that oppor-

of the *John Bull*. He said, "It is worse with you than with us: here an author is obliged to sacrifice twenty mornings and twenty pair of black silk stockings, in paying his court to the Editors of different journals, to ensure a hearing from the public; but with you, it seems, he must give up his understanding and his character, to establish a claim to taste or learning!" He asked if the scandal could not be disproved, and retorted on the heads of the aggressors: but I said that these were persons of no character, or studiously screened by their employers; and besides, the English imagination was a bird of heavy wing, that, if once dragged through the kennels of Billingsgate abuse, could not well raise itself out of it again. He could hardly believe that under the Hanover dynasty (a dynasty founded to secure us against tyranny) a theatrical licenser had struck the word "tyrant" out of Mr. Shee's tragedy, as offensive to ears polite, or as if from this time forward there could be supposed to be no such thing *in rerum naturâ;* and that the common ejaculation, "Good God!" was erased from the same piece, as in a strain of too great levity in this age of cant. I told him that public opinion in England was at present governed by half a dozen miscreants, who undertook to bait, hoot, and worry every man out of his country, or into an obscure grave, with lies and nicknames,

tunity to retract some other American calumny. Mr. L. called on one Secretary of the Admiralty, but there are two Secretaries of the Admiralty!

who was not prepared to take the political sacrament of the day, and use his best endeavours (he and his friends) to banish the last traces of freedom, truth, and honesty from the land. "To be direct and honest is not safe." To be a Reformer, the friend of a Reformer, or the friend's friend of a Reformer, is as much as a man's peace, reputation, or even life is worth. Answer, if it is not so, pale shade of Keats, or living mummy of William Gifford! Dr. E—— was unwilling to credit this statement, but the proofs were too flagrant. He asked me what became of that band of patriots that swarmed in *our* younger days, that were so glowing-hot, desperate, and noisy in the year 1794? I said I could not tell; but referred him to our present Poet-Laureate for an account of them!

"Can these things be,
And overcome us like a summer-cloud,
Without our special wonder?"

I suspect it is peculiar to the English not to answer the letters of their friends abroad. They know you are anxious to hear, and have a surly, sullen pleasure in disappointing you. To oblige is a thing abhorrent to their imaginations; to be uneasy at not hearing from home just when one wishes, is a weakness which they cannot encourage. Any thing like responsibility attached to their writing is a kind of restraint upon their free-will, an interference with their independence. There is a sense of superiority

in not letting you know what you wish to know, and in keeping you in a state of helpless suspense. Besides, they think you are angry at their not writing, and would make them *if you could;* and they show their resentment of your impatience and ingratitude by continuing not to write.—One thing truly edifying in the accounts from England, is the number of murders and robberies with which the newspapers abound. One would suppose that the repetition of the details, week after week, and day after day, might stagger us a little as to our superlative idea of the goodness, honesty, and industry of the English people. No such thing: whereas one similar fact occurring once a year abroad fills us with astonishment, and makes us ready to *dub* the Italians (without any further inquiry) a nation of assassins and banditti. It is not safe to live or travel among them. Is it not strange, that we should persist in drawing such wilful conclusions from such groundless premises? A murder or a street-robbery in London is a matter of course*: accumulate a score of these under the most aggravated circumstances one upon the back of the other, in town and country, in the course of a few weeks—they all go for nothing; they make nothing against the English character in the abstract; the force

* Chief Justice Holt used to say, that "there were more robberies committed in England than in Scotland, *because we had better hearts.*" The English are at all times disposed to interpret this literally.

of prejudice is stronger than the weight of evidence. The process of the mind is this; and absurd as it appears, is natural enough. We say (to ourselves) we are English, *we* are good people, and therefore the English are good people. We carry a proxy in our bosoms for the national character in general. Our own motives are "very stuff o' the conscience," and not like those of barbarous foreigners. Besides, we know many excellent English people, and the mass of the population cannot be affected in the scale of morality by the outrages of a few ruffians, which instantly meet with the reward they merit from wholesome and excellent laws. We are not to be moved from this position, that the great body of the British public do not live by thieving and cutting the throats of their neighbours, whatever the accounts in the newspapers might lead us to suspect. The streets are lined with bakers', butchers', and haberdashers' shops, instead of night-cellars and gaming-houses; and are crowded with decent, orderly, well-dressed people, instead of being rendered impassable by gangs of swindlers and pickpockets. *The exception does not make the rule.* Nothing can be more clear or proper; and yet if a single Italian commit a murder or a robbery, we immediately form an abstraction of this individual case, and because we are ignorant of the real character of the people or state of manners in a million of instances, take upon us, like true Englishmen, to fill up the blank, which is left at the mercy of our horror-

struck imaginations, with bugbears and monsters of every description. We should extend to others the toleration and the suspense of judgment we claim; and I am sure we stand in need of it from those who read the important head of "ACCIDENTS AND OFFENCES" in our Journals. It is true an Italian baker, some time ago, shut his wife up in an oven, where she was burnt to death; the heir of a noble family stabbed an old woman to rob her of her money; a lady of quality had her step-daughter chained to a bed of straw, and fed on bread and water till she lost her senses. This translated into vulgar English means that all the bakers' wives in Italy are burnt by their husbands at a slow fire; that all the young nobility are common bravoes; that all the step-mothers exercise unheard-of and unrelenting cruelty on the children of a former marriage. We only want a striking frontispiece to make out a tragic volume. As the traveller advances into the country, robbers and rumours of robbers fly before him with the horizon. In Italy,

"Man seldom is—but always to be *robbed*."

At Turin, they told me it was not wise to travel by a vetturino to Florence without arms. At Florence, I was told one could not walk out to look at an old ruin in Rome, without expecting to see a Lazzaroni start from behind some part of it with a pistol in his hand. "There's no such thing;" but hatred has its phantoms as well as fear; and the English traduce and

indulge their prejudices against other nations in order to have a pretence for maltreating them. This moral delicacy plays an under-game to their political profligacy. I am at present kept from proceeding forward to Naples by *imaginary* bands of brigands that infest the road the whole way. The fact is, that a gang of banditti, who had committed a number of atrocities and who had their haunts in the mountains near Sonino, were taken up about three years ago, to the amount of two-and-thirty: four of them were executed at Rome, and their wives still get their living in this city by sitting as models to artists, on account of the handsomeness of their features and the richness of their dresses. As to courtesans, from which one cannot separate the name of Italy even in idea, I have seen but one person answering to this description since I came, and I do not even know that this was one. But I saw a girl in white (an unusual thing) standing at some distance at the corner of one of the bye-streets in Rome; after looking round her for a moment, she ran hastily up the street again, as if in fear of being discovered, and a countryman who was passing with a cart at the time, stopped to look and hiss after her. If the draymen in London were to stop to gape and hoot at all the girls they see standing at the corners of streets in a doubtful capacity, they would have enough to do. But the tide of public prostitution that pours down all our streets is considered by some moralists as a drain to carry off the peccant humours of private life, and to keep the

inmost recesses of the female breast sweet and pure from blemish! If this is to be the test, we have indeed nearly arrived at the idea of a perfect commonwealth.

Cicisbeism is still kept up in Italy, though somewhat on the decline. I have nothing to say in favour of that anomaly in vice and virtue. The English women are particularly shocked at it, who are allowed to hate their husbands, provided they do not like any body else. It is a kind of *marriage within a marriage*; it begins with infidelity to end in constancy; it is not a state of licensed dissipation, but is a real chain of the affections, superadded to the first formal one, and that often lasts for life. A gay captain in the Pope's Guard is selected by a lady as her *cavalier servente* in the prime of life, and is seen digging in the garden of the family in a grey jacket and white hairs thirty years after. This does not look like a love of change. The husband is of course always a *fixture*; not so the *cavalier servente*, who is liable to be removed for a new favourite. In noble families the lover must be noble; and he must be approved by the husband. A young officer, who the other day volunteered this service to a beautiful Marchioness without either of these titles, and was a sort of interloper on the intended gallant, was sent to Volterra. Whatever is the height to which this system has been carried, or the level to which it has sunk, it does not appear to have extinguished jealousy in all its excess as a part of the national character, as the following story will shew:

it is related by M. Beyle, in his charming little work, entitled *De l'Amour*, as a companion to the famous one in Dante; and I shall give the whole passage in his words, as placing the Italian character (in former as well as latter times) in a striking point of view.

"I allude," he says, "to those touching lines of Dante:—

"Deh! quando tu sarai tornato al mondo,
"Ricordati di me, che son la Pia;
"Sienna mi fè: disfecemi Maremma:
"Salsi colui, che inannellata pria,
"Disposando, m'avea con la sua gemma."—*Purgatorio*, c. 5.

"The woman who speaks with so much reserve, had in secret undergone the fate of Desdemona, and had it in her power, by a single word, to have revealed her husband's crime to the friends whom she had left upon earth.

"Nello della Pietra obtained in marriage the hand of Madonna Pia, sole heiress of the Ptolomei, the richest and most noble family of Sienna. Her beauty, which was the admiration of all Tuscany, gave rise to a jealousy in the breast of her husband, that, envenomed by false reports and by suspicions continually reviving, led to a frightful catastrophe. It is not easy to determine at this day if his wife was altogether innocent; but Dante has represented her as such. Her husband carried her with him into the marshes of Volterra, celebrated then, as now, for the pestiferous effects of the air. Never would he tell his

unhappy wife the reason of her banishment into so dangerous a place. His pride did not deign to pronounce either complaint or accusation. He lived with her alone, in a deserted tower, of which I have been to see the ruins on the sea-shore; there he never broke his disdainful silence, never replied to the questions of his youthful bride, never listened to her entreaties. He waited unmoved by her for the air to produce its fatal effects. The vapours of this unwholesome swamp were not long in tarnishing features the most beautiful, they say, that in that age had appeared upon earth. In a few months she died. Some chroniclers of these remote times report, that Nello employed the dagger to hasten her end; she died in the marshes in some horrible manner; but the mode of her death remained a mystery, even to her contemporaries. Nello della Pietra survived to pass the rest of his days in a silence which was never broken.

Nothing can be conceived more noble or more delicate than the manner in which the ill-fated Pia addresses herself to Dante. She desires to be recalled to the memory of the friends whom she had quitted so young: at the same time, in telling her name and alluding to her husband, she does not allow herself the smallest complaint against a cruelty unexampled, but thenceforth irreparable; and merely intimates that he knows the history of her death. This constancy in vengeance and in suffering is to be met with, I believe, only among the people of the South. In Piedmont,

I found myself the involuntary witness of a fact almost similar; but I was at the time ignorant of the details. I was ordered with five-and-twenty dragoons into the woods that border the Sesia, to prevent the contraband traffic. On my arrival in the evening at this wild and solitary place, I distinguished among the trees the ruins of an old castle: I went to it; to my great surprise, it was inhabited. I there found a Nobleman of the country, of a very unpromising aspect; a man six feet in height, and forty years of age: he allowed me a couple of apartments with a very ill grace. Here I entertained myself by getting up some pieces of music with my quarter-master: after the expiration of some days, we discovered that our host kept guard over a woman whom we called Camilla in jest, we were far from suspecting the dreadful truth. She died at the end of six weeks. I had the melancholy curiosity to see her in her coffin; I bribed a monk who had charge of it, and towards midnight, under pretext of sprinkling the holy water, he conducted me into the chapel. I there saw one of those fine faces, which are beautiful even in the bosom of death: she had a large aquiline nose, of which I never shall forget the noble and expressive outline. I quitted this mournful spot; but five years after, a detachment of my regiment accompanying the Emperor to his coronation as King of Italy, I had the whole story recounted to me. I learned that the jealous husband, the Count of ——, had one morning found, hang-

ing to his wife's bedside, an English watch belonging to a young man in the little town where they lived. The same day he took her to the ruined castle, in the midst of the forests of the Sesia. Like Nello della Pietra, he uttered not a single word. If she made him any request, he presented to her sternly and in silence the English watch, which he had always about him. In this manner he passed nearly three years with her. She at length fell a victim to despair, in the flower of her age. Her husband attempted to dispatch the owner of the watch with a stiletto, failed, fled to Genoa, embarked there, and no tidings have been heard of him since. His property was confiscated."—*De l'Amour*, vol. i. p. 131.

This story is interesting and well told. One such incident, or one page in Dante or in Spenser is worth all the route between this and Paris, and all the sights in all the post-roads in Europe. Oh Sienna! if I felt charmed with thy narrow, tenantless streets, or looked delighted through thy arched gateway over the subjected plain, it was that some recollections of Madonna Pia hung upon the beatings of my spirit, and converted a barren waste into the regions of romance!

CHAPTER XXI.

We had some thoughts of taking a lodging at L'Ariccia, at the Caffé del Piazza, for a month, but the deep sandy roads, the centinels posted every half-mile on this, which is the route for Naples (which shewed that it was not very safe to leave them), the loose, straggling woods sloping down to the dreary marshes, and the story of Hippolitus painted on the walls of the inn (who, it seems, was "native to the manner here"), deterred us. L'Ariccia, besides being, after Cortona, the oldest place in Italy, is also one step towards Naples, which I had a strong desire to see—its brimming shores, its sky which glows like one entire sun, Vesuvius, the mouth of Hell, and Sorrentum, like the Islands of the Blest—yet here again the reports of robbers, exaggerated alike by foreigners and natives, who wish to keep you where you are, the accounts of hogs without hair, and children without clothes to their backs, the vermin (animal as well as human), the gilded hams and legs of mutton that Forsyth speaks of, gave me a distaste to the journey, and I turned back to put an end to the question. I am fond of the sun, though I do not like to see him and the assassin's knife glaring over my head together.

As to the real amount of the danger of travelling this road, as far as I can learn, it is this—there is at present a possibility but no probability of your being robbed or kidnapped, if you go in the daytime and by the common method of a Vetturino, stopping two nights on the road. If you go alone, and with a determination to set time, place, and circumstances at defiance, like a personified representation of John Bull, maintaining the character of your countrymen for sturdiness and independence of spirit, you stand a very good chance of being shot through the head: the same thing might happen to you, if you refused your money to an English footpad; but if you give it freely, like a gentleman, and do not stand too nicely upon a punctilio, they let you pass like one. If you have no money about you, you must up into the mountain, and wait till you can get it. For myself, my remittances have not been very regular even in walled towns; how I should fare in this respect upon the forked mountain, I cannot tell, and certainly I have no wish to try. A friend of mine said that he thought it *the only romantic thing going*, this of being carried off by the banditti; that life was become too tame and insipid without such accidents, and that it would not be amiss to put one's self in the way of such an adventure, like putting in for the grand prize in the lottery. Assuredly, one is not likely to go to sleep in such circumstances: one person who was detained in this manner, and threatened every hour with being dispatched, went mad in conse-

quence. A French Artist was laid hold of by a gang of the outlaws, as he was sketching in the neighbourhood of their haunts about a year ago: he did not think their mode of life at all agreeable. As he had no money, they employed him in making sketches of their heads, with which they were exceedingly delighted. Their vanity kept him continually on the alert when they had a moment's leisure; and, besides, he was fatigued almost to death, for they made long marches of from forty to fifty miles a day, and scarcely ever rested more than one night in the same place. They travelled through bye-roads (in constant apprehension of the military) in parties of five or six, and met at some common rendezvous at night-fall. He was in no danger from them in the day-time; but at night they sat up drinking and carousing, and when they were in this state of excitement, he was in considerable jeopardy from their violence or sportive freaks: they amused themselves with presenting their loaded pieces at his breast, or threatened to dispatch him if he did not promise to procure ransom. At last he effected his escape in one of their drunken bouts. Their seizure of the Austrian officer last year was singular enough: they crept for above a mile on their hands and knees from the foot of the mountain which was their place of retreat, and carried off their prize in the same manner, so as to escape the notice of the sentinels who were stationed at short distances on the road-side. Some years since a plan was laid to carry

off Lucien Buonaparte from his villa at Frascati, about eleven miles from Rome, on the Albano side, where the same range of Apennines begins: he was walking in his garden and saw them approaching through some trees, for his glance is quick and furtive; he retired into the house, his valet came out to meet them, who passed himself off for his master, they were delighted with their sham-prize, and glad to take 4,000 crowns to release him. Since then Lucien Buonaparte has lived in Rome. I remember once meeting this celebrated character in the streets of Paris, walking arm in arm with Maria Cosway, with whom I had drunk tea the evening before. He was dressed in a light drab-coloured great-coat, and was then a spirited, dashing-looking young man. I believe I am the only person in England who ever read his CHARLEMAGNE. It is as clever a poem as can be written by a man who is not a poet. It came out in two volumes quarto, and several individuals were applied to by the publishers to translate it; among others Sir Walter Scott, who gave for answer, "that as to Mister Buonaparte's poem, he should have nothing to do with it." Such was the petty spite of this understrapper of greatness and of titles, himself since titled, the scale of whose intellect can be equalled by nothing but the pitifulness and rancour of his prejudices! The last account I have heard of the exploits of Neapolitan banditti is, that they had seized upon two out of three English-

men, who had determined upon passing through Calabria on their way to Sicily, and were proceeding beyond Pæstum for this purpose. They were told by the Commandant there, that this was running into the lion's mouth, that there were no patrols to protect them farther, and that they were sure to be intercepted; but an Englishman's will is his law—they went forward—and succeeded in getting themselves into *the only remaining romantic situation.* I have not heard whether they have yet got out of it. The national propensity to contend with difficulty and to resist obstacles is curious, perhaps praiseworthy. A young Englishman returned the other day to Italy with a horse that he had brought with him for more than two thousand miles on the other side of Grand Cairo; and poor Bowdich gave up the ghost in a second attempt to penetrate to the source of the Niger, the encouragement to persevere being in proportion to the impossibility of success! I am myself somewhat effeminate, and would rather "the primrose path of dalliance tread;" or the height of my ambition in this line would be to track the ancient route up the valley of the Simplon, leaving the modern road (much as I admire the work and the workman), and clambering up the ledges of rocks, and over broken bridges, at the risk of a sprained ankle or a broken limb, to return to a late, but excellent dinner at the post-house at Brigg!

What increases the alarm of robbers in the South

of Italy, is the reviving of old stories, like the multiplication of echoes, and shifting their dates indefinitely, so as to excite the fears of the listener, or answer the purposes of the speaker. About three years ago, a desperate gang of ruffians infested the passes of the Abruzzi, and committed a number of atrocities; but this gang, to the amount of about thirty, were seized and broken up, their ringleaders beheaded in the Square di Popolo at Rome, and their wives or mistresses now live there by sitting for their pictures to English artists. The remainder figure as convicts in striped yellow and brown dresses in the streets of Rome, and very civilly pull off their hats to strangers as they pass. By the way, I cannot help reprobating this practice of employing felons as common labourers in places of public resort. Either you must be supposed to keep up your feelings of dislike and indignation against them while thus mixing with the throng and innocently employed, which is a disagreeable and forced operation of the sense of justice; or if you retain no such feelings towards these victims of the law, then why do they retain the chains on their feet and ugly badges on their shoulders? If the thing is to be treated seriously, it is painful: if lightly and good-humouredly, it turns the whole affair into a farce or drama, with as little of the useful as the pleasant in it. I know nothing of these people that I see manacled and branded, but that they are labouring in a broiling sun for my convenience; if one

of them were to break loose, I should not care to stop him. When we witness the punishments of individuals, we should know their crimes; or at least their punishment and their delinquency should not be mixed up indiscriminately with the ordinary gaieties and business of human life. It is a chapter of the volume that should be read apart! About six months ago, twenty-two brigands came down from the mountains at Velletri, and carried off four young women from the village. A Vetturino, who wished me to return with him to Florence, spoke of this as having happened the week before. There is a band of about ninety banditti scattered through the mountains near Naples. Some years ago they were the terror of travellers: at present they are more occupied in escaping from the police themselves. But by thus confounding dates and names, all parts of the road are easily filled all the year round with nothing but robbers and rumours of robbers. In short, any one I believe can pass with proper precaution from Rome to Naples and back again, with tolerable, if not with absolute security. If he can guard equally against petty thieving and constant imposition for the rest of his route, it will be well.

Before leaving Rome, we went to Tivoli, of which so much has been said. The morning was brigh and cloudless; but a thick mist rose from the low, rank, marshy grounds of the Campagna, and enveloped a number of curious objects to the right and

left, till we approached the sulphurous stream of Solfatara, which we could distinguish at some distance by its noise and smell, and which crossing the road like a blue ugly snake, infects the air in its hasty progress to the sea. The bituminous lake from which it springs is about a mile distant, and has the remains of an ancient temple on its borders. Farther on is a round brick tower, the tomb of the Plautian family, and Adrian's villa glimmers with its vernal groves and nodding arches to the right. In Rome, around it nothing strikes the eye, nothing rivets the attention but ruins, the fragments of what has been; the past is like a *halo* forever surrounding and obscuring the present! Ruins should be seen in a desert, like those of Palmyra, and a pilgrimage should be made to them; but who would take up his abode among tombs? Or if there be a country and men in it, why have they nothing to shew but the relics of antiquity, or why are the living contented to crawl about like worms, or to hover like shadows in the monuments of the dead? Every object he sees reminds the modern Roman that he is nothing—the spirits of former times overshadow him, and dwarf his pigmy efforts: every object he sees reminds the traveller that greatness is its own grave. Glory cannot last; for when a thing is once done, it need not be done again, and with the energy to act, a people lose the privilege *to be*. They repose upon the achievements of their ancestors; and because every thing has been done for them,

sink into torpor, and dwindle into the counterfeits of what they were. The Greeks will not recover their freedom till they forget that they had ancestors, for nothing *is* twice because it *was* once. The Americans will perhaps lose theirs, when they begin fully to reap all the fruits of it; for the energy necessary to acquire freedom, and the ease that follows the enjoyment of it, are almost incompatible. If Italy should ever be any thing again, it will be when the tokens of her former glory, pictures, statues, triumphal arches are mouldered in the dust, and she has to re-tread the gradual stages of civilization, from primeval barbarism to the topmost round of luxury and refinement; or when some new light gives her a new impulse; or when the last oppression (such as in all probability impends over her) equally contrary to former independence, to modern apathy, stinging her to the quick, once more kindles the fire in her eye, and twines the deadly terrors on her brow. Then she might have music in her streets, the dance beneath her vines, inhabitants in her houses, business in her shops, passengers in her roads, commerce on her shores, honesty in her dealings, openness in her looks, books for the censorship, the love of right for the fear of power, and a calculation of consequences from a knowledge of principles—and England, like the waning moon, would grow pale in the rising dawn of liberty, that she had in vain tried to tarnish and obscure! *Mais assez des reflexions pour un voyageur.*

Tivoli is an enchanting—a fairy spot. Its rocks, its grottos, its temples, its waterfalls, and the rainbows reflected on them, answer to the description, and make a perfect play upon the imagination. Every object is light and fanciful, yet steeped in classic recollections. The whole is a fine net-work—a rare assemblage of intricate and high-wrought beauties. To do justice to the scene would require the pen of Mr. Moore, minute and striking as it is, sportive yet romantic, displaying all the fascinations of sense, and unfolding the mysteries of sentiment,

"Where all is strength below, and all above is grace,"—

glittering like a sunbeam on the Sybil's Temple at top, or darting on a rapid antithesis to the dark grotto of the God beneath, loading the prismatic spray with epithets, linking the meeting beauties on each side the abrupt, yawning chasm by an alliteration, painting the flowers, pointing the rocks, passing the narrow bridge on a dubious metaphor; and blending the natural and artificial, the modern and the antique, the simple and the quaint, the glimmer and the gloom in an exquisite profusion of fluttering conceits. He would be able to describe it much better, with its tiny cascades and jagged precipices, than his friend Lord Byron has described the Fall of Terni, who makes it, without any reason that I can find, tortuous, dark, and boiling like a witch's cauldron. On the contrary, it is simple and majestic in its character, a clear mountain-stream that

pours an uninterrupted, lengthened sheet of water over a precipice of eight hundred feet, in perpendicular descent, and gracefully winding its way to the channel beyond, while on one side the stained rock rises bare and stately the whole height, and on the other, the gradual green woods ascend, moistened by the ceaseless spray, and lulled by the roar of the waterfall, as the ear enjoys the sound of famous poet's verse. If this noble and interesting object have a fault, it is that it is too slender, straight, and accompanied with too few wild or grotesque ornaments. It is the Doric, or at any rate the Ionic, among waterfalls. It has nothing of the texture of Lord Byron's terzains, twisted, zig-zag, pent up and struggling for a vent, broken off at the end of a line, or point of a rock, diving under ground, or out of the reader's comprehension, and pieced on to another stanza or shelving rock.—Nature has

"Poured it out as plain
"As downright Shippen, or as old Montaigne."

To say the truth, if Lord Byron had put it into *Don Juan* instead of *Childe Harold*, he might have compared the part which her ladyship has chosen to perform on this occasion to an experienced waiter pouring a bottle of ale into a tumbler at a tavern. It has somewhat of the same continued, plump, right-lined descent. It is not frittered into little parts, nor contrasted into quaintness, nor tortured into fury. All the intricacy and contradiction that the noble Poet

ascribes to it belong to Tivoli; but then Tivoli has none of the grandeur or violence of the description in *Childe Harold.* The poetry is fine, but not like.

As I have got so far on my way, I may as well jump the intermediate space, and proceed with my statistics here, as there was nothing on the road between this and Rome worth mentioning, except Narni (ten miles from Terni), the approach to which overlooks a fine, bold, woody, precipitous valley. We stopped at Terni for the express purpose of visiting the Fall, which is four or five miles from it. The road is excellent, and commands a succession of charming points of view. You must pass the little village of Papinio, perched like a set of pigeon-houses on the point of a rock about halfway up, which has been battered almost in pieces by French, Austrians, and others at different times, from a fort several hundred feet above it, and that looks directly down upon the road. When you get to the top of the winding ascent, and immediately before you turn off by a romantic little path to the waterfall, you see the ranges of the Abruzzi and the frozen top of the Piede Lupo. Along this road the Austrian troops marched three years ago to the support of good government and social order at Naples. The prospect of the cold blue mountain-tops, and other prospects which the sight of this road recalled, chilled me, and I hastened down the side-path to lose, in the roar of the Velino tumbling from its rocky height, and the wild freedom of nature, my recollection of tyranny

and tyrants. On a green bank far below, so as to be just discernible, a shepherd-boy was sleeping under the shadow of a tree, surrounded by his flock, enjoying peace and freedom, scarce knowing their names. That's something—we must wait for the rest!

We returned to the inn at Terni too late to proceed on our journey, and were thrust, as a special favour, into a disagreeable apartment. We had the satisfaction, however, to hear the united voices of the passengers by two vetturinos, French and Italian men and women, lifted up against the supper and wine as intolerably bad. The general complaint was, that having paid so much for our fare, we were treated like beggars—*comme des gueux*. This was true enough, and not altogether unreasonable. Let no one who can help it, and who travels for pleasure, travel by a vetturino. You are treated much in the same manner as if in England you went by the caravan or the waggon. In fact, this mode of conveyance is an imposition on innkeepers and the public. It is the result of a combination among the vetturino owners, who bargain to provide you for a certain sum, and then billet you upon the innkeepers for as little as they can, who when thus obtruded upon them, under the guarantee of a grasping stage-coach driver, consider you as common property or prey, receive you with incivility, keep out of the way, will not deign you an answer, stint you in the quantity of your provisions, poison you by the quality, order you into their worst

apartments, force other people into the same room or even bed with you keep you, in a state of continual irritation and annoyance all the time you are in the house, and send you away jaded and dissatisfied with your reception, and terrified at the idea of arriving at the next place of refreshment, for fear of meeting with a renewal of the same contemptible mortifications and petty insults. You have no remedy: if you complain to the Vetturino, he says it is the fault of the innkeeper; if you remonstrate with the innkeeper, he says he has orders from the Vetturino only to provide certain things. It is of little use to try to bribe the waiters; they doubt your word, and besides, do not like to forego the privilege of treating a vetturino passenger as one. It is best, if you travel in this manner, to pay for yourself; and then you may stand some chance of decent accommodation. I was foolish enough to travel twice in this manner, and pay three Napoleons a day, for which I might have gone post, and fared in the most sumptuous manner. I ought to add, in justice, that when I have escaped from the guardianship of Monsieur le Vetturino and have stopped at inns on my own account, as was the case at Venice, Milan, and at Florence twice, I have no reason to complain either of the treatment or the expence. As to economy, it is in vain to look for it in travelling in Italy or at an hotel; and if you succeed in procuring a private lodging for a time, besides the everlasting trickery and cabal, you are likely to

come off with very meagre fare, unless you can eat Italian dishes. I ought, however, to repeat what I believe I have said before, that the bread, butter, milk, wine, and poultry that you get here (even ordinarily) are excellent, and that you may also obtain excellent tea and coffee.

We proceeded next morning (in no very good humour) on our way to Spoleto. The day was brilliant, and our road lay through steep and narrow defiles for several hours. The sides of the hills on each side were wild and woody; indeed, the whole ride was interesting, and the last hill before we came to Spoleto, with a fine monastery embosomed in its thick tufted trees, crowned our satisfaction with the journey. Spoleto is a handsome town, delightfully situated, and has an appearance (somewhat startling in Italy) as if life were not quite extinct in it. It stands on the slope of a range of the Apennines, extending as far as Foligno and Perugia, and "sees and is seen" to a great distance. From Perugia in particular (an interval of forty miles) you seem as if you could put your hand upon it, so plain does it appear, owing to the contrast between the white stone-houses, and the dark pine-groves by which it is surrounded. The effect of this contrast is not always pleasant. The single cottages or villas scattered in the neighbourhood of towns in Italy, often look like dominos or dice spread on a dark green cloth. We arrived at Foligno early in the evening, and as a memorable exception to the

rest of our route, found there an inn equally clean and hospitable. From the windows of our room we could see the young people of the town walking out in a fine open country, to breathe the clear fresh air, and the priests sauntering in groups and enjoying the *otium cum dignitate.* It was for some monks of Foligno that Raphael painted his inimitable Madonna.

We turned off at Assizi to view the triple Franciscan church and monastery. We saw the picture of Christ (shewn by some nuns), that used to smile upon St. Francis at his devotions; and the little chapel in the plain below, where he preached to his followers six hundred years ago, over which a large church is at present built, like Popery surmounting Christianity. The church on the top of the hill, built soon after his death in honour of the saint, and where his heart reposes, is a curiosity in its kind. First, two churches were raised, one on the top of the other, and then a third was added below with some difficulty, by means of excavations in the rock. The last boasts a modern and somewhat finical mausoleum or shrine, and the two first are ornamented with fresco paintings by Giotto and Ghirlandaio, which are most interesting and valuable specimens of the early history of the art. I see nothing to contemn in them—much to admire—fine heads, simple grouping, a knowledge of drawing and fore-shortening, and dignified attitudes and expressions, some of which Raphael has not disdained to copy, though he has improved upon them.

St. Francis died about 1220, and this church was finished and ornamented with these designs of the chief actions of his life, within forty months afterwards; so that the pictures in question must be about six hundred years old. We are not, however, to wonder at the maturity of these productions of the pencil; the art did not arise out of barbarism or nothing, but from a lofty preconception in the minds of those who first practised it, and applied it to purposes of devotion. Even the grace and majesty of Raphael were, I apprehend, but emanations of the spirit of the Roman Catholic religion, and existed virtually in the minds of his countrymen long before and after he transferred them, with consummate skill, to the canvass. Not a Madonna scrawled on the walls near Rome, not a baby-house figure of the Virgin, that is out of character and costume, or that is not imbued with an expression of resignation, benignity, and purity. We were shewn these different objects by a young priest, who explained them to us with a gracefulness of manner, and a mild eloquence, characteristic of his order. I forgot to mention, in the proper place, that I was quite delighted with the external deportment of the ecclesiastics in Rome. It was marked by a perfect propriety, decorum, and humanity, from the highest to the lowest. Not the slightest look or gesture to remind you that you were foreigners or heretics—an example of civility that is far from being superfluous, even in the capital of the Christian world. It may

be said that this is art, and a desire to gain upon the good opinion of strangers. Be it so, but it must be allowed that it is calculated to this end. Good manners have this advantage over good morals, that they lie more upon the surface; and there is nothing, I own, that inclines me to think so well of the understandings or dispositions of others, as a thorough absence of all impertinence. I do not think *they* can be the worst people in the world who habitually pay most attention to the feelings of others; nor those the best who are endeavouring every moment to hurt them. At Perugia, while looking at some panels in a church painted by Pietro Perugino, we met with a young Irish priest, who claimed acquaintance with us as country-folks, and recommended our staying six days, to see the ceremonies and finery attending the translation of the deceased head of his order from the church where he lay to his final resting-place. We were obliged by this proposal, but declined it. It was curious to hear English spoken by the inmate of a Benedictine Monastery,—to see the manners of an Italian priest engrafted on the Irish accent—to think that distant countries are brought together by agreement in religion—that the same country is rent asunder by differences in it. Man is certainly an ideal being, whom the breath of an opinion wafts from Indus to the Pole, and who is ready to sacrifice the present world and every object in it for a reversion in the skies! Perugia is situated on a lofty hill, and is in

appearance the most solid mass of building I ever beheld. It commands a most extensive view in all directions, and the ascent to it is precipitous on every side. Travelling this road from Rome to Florence is like an eagle's flight—from hill-top to hill-top, from towered city to city, and your eye devours your way before you over hill or plain. We saw Cortona on our right, looking over its wall of ancient renown, conscious of its worth, not obtruding itself on superficial notice; and passed through Arezzo, the reputed birthplace of Petrarch. All the way we were followed (hard upon) by another Vetturino, with an English family, and we had a scramble whenever we stopped for supper, beds, or milk. At Incisa, the last stage before we arrived at Florence, an intimation was conveyed that we should give up our apartments in the inn, and seek for lodgings elsewhere. This modest proposition could come only from English people, who have such an opinion of their dormant stock of pretended good-nature, that they think all the world must in return be ready to give up their own comforts to oblige them. We had two French gentlemen in the coach with us, equally well-behaved and well-informed, and two Italians in the cabriolet, as good-natured and "honest as the skin between their brows." Near Perugia we passed the celebrated lake of Thrasymene, near which Hannibal defeated the Roman consul Flaminius. It struck me as not unlike Windermere in character and scenery, but I have seen

other lakes since, which have driven it out of my head. Florence (the city of flowers) seemed to deserve its name as we entered it for the second time more than it did the first. The weather had been cold during part of our journey, but now it had changed to sultry heat. The people looked exceedingly plain and hard-featured, after having passed through the Roman States. They have the look of the Scotch people, only fiercer and more ill-tempered.

CHAPTER XXII.

I HAVE already described the road between Florence and Bologna. I found it much the same on returning; for barren rocks and mountains undergo little alteration either in summer or winter. Indeed, of the two, I prefer the effect in the most dreary season, for it is then most complete and consistent with itself: on some kinds of scenery, as on some characters, any attempt at the gay and pleasing sits ill, and is a mere piece of affectation. There is so far a distinction between the Apennines and Alps, that the latter are often covered with woods, and with patches of the richest verdure, and are capable of all the gloom of winter or the bloom of spring. The soil of the Apennines, on the contrary, is as dry and *gritty* as the rocks themselves, being nothing but a collection of sand-heaps and ashes, and mocks at every idea that is not of a repulsive and disagreeable kind. We stopped the first night at Traversa, a miserable inn or almost hovel on the road side, in the most desolate part of this track; and found amidst scenes, which the imagination and the pen of travellers have peopled with ghastly phantoms and the assassin's midnight revelry, a kind but simple reception, and the greatest

sweetness of manners, prompted by the wish, but conscious of being perhaps without the means to please. Courtesy in cities or palaces goes for little, means little, for it may and must be put on; in the cottage or on the mountain-side it is welcome to the heart, for it comes from it. It then has its root in unsophisticated nature, without the gloss of art, and shews us the original goodness of the soil or germ, from which human affections and social intercourse in all their ramifications spring. A little boy clung about its mother, wondering at the strangers; but from the very thoughts of novelty and distance, nestling more fondly in the bosom of home. What is the map of Europe, what all the glories of it, what the possession of them, to that poor little fellow's dream, to his sidelong glance at that wide world of fancy that circles his native rocks!

The second morning, we reached the last of the Apennines that overlook Bologna, and saw stretched out beneath our feet a different scene, the vast plain of Lombardy, and almost the whole of the North of Italy, like a rich sea of boundless verdure, with towns and villas spotting it like the sails of ships. A hazy inlet of the Adriatic appeared to the right (probably the Gulph of Comachio). We strained our eyes in vain to catch a doubtful view of the Alps, but they were still sunk below the horizon. We presently descended into this plain (which formed a perfect contrast to the country we had lately passed), and it

answered fully to the promise it had given us. We travelled for days, for weeks through it, and found nothing but ripeness, plenty, and beauty. It may well be called the Garden of Italy or of the World. The whole way from Bologna to Venice, from Venice to Milan, it is literally so. But I anticipate.—We went to our old inn at Bologna, which we liked better the second time than the first; and had just time to snatch a glimpse of the Guidos and Domenichinos at the Academy, which gleamed dark and beautiful through the twilight. We set out early the next morning on our way to Venice, turning off to Ferrara. It was a fine spring morning. The dew was on the grass, and shone like diamonds in the sun. A refreshing breeze fanned the light-green odorous branches of the trees, which spread their shady screen on each side of the road, which lay before us as straight as an arrow for miles. Venice was at the end of it; Padua, Ferrara, midway. The prospect (both to the sense and to the imagination) was exhilarating; and we enjoyed it for some hours, till we stopped to breakfast at a smart-looking detached inn at a turning of the road, called, I think, the *Albergo di Venezia*. This was one of the pleasantest places we came to during the whole of our route. We were shewn into a long saloon, into which the sun shone at one extremity, and we looked out upon the green fields and trees at the other. There were flowers in the room. An excellent breakfast of coffee, bread, butter, eggs, and

slices of Bologna sausages was served up with neatness and attention. An elderly female, thin, without a cap, and with white thread-stockings, watched at the door of a chamber not far from us, with the patience of an eastern slave. The door opened, and a white robe was handed out, which she aired carefully over a chaffing-dish with mechanical indifference, and an infinite reduplication of the same folds. It was our young landlady who was dressing for church within, and who at length issued out, more remarkable for the correctness of her costume than the beauty of her person. Some rustics below were playing at a game, that from the incessant loud jarring noises of counting that accompanied it, implied equally good lungs and nerves in the performers and by-standers. At the tinkling of a village bell, all was in a moment silent, and the entrance of a little chapel was crowded with old and young, kneeling in postures of more or less earnest devotion. We walked forward, delighted with the appearance of the country, and with the simple manners of the inhabitants; nor could we have proceeded less than four or five miles along an excellent footpath, but under a broiling sun, before we saw any signs of our Vetturino, who was willing to take this opportunity of easing his horses—a practice common with those sort of gentry. Instead of a fellow-feeling with you, you find an instinctive inclination in persons of this class all through Italy to cheat and deceive you: the more

easy or cordial you are with them, the greater is their opinion of your folly and their own cunning, and the more are they determined to repel or evade any advances to a fair understanding: threaten, or treat them with indignity, and you have some check over them; relax the reins a moment, and they are sure to play you some scurvy trick.

At Ferrara we were put on short allowance, and as we found remonstrance vain, we submitted in silence. We were the more mortified at this treatment, as we had begun to hope for better things; but Mr. Henry Waister, our Commissary on the occasion, was determined to make a good thing of his three Napoleons a-day; he had strained a point in procuring us a tolerable supper and breakfast at the two last stages, which must serve for some time to come; and as he would not pay for our dinner, the landlord would not let us have one, and there the matter rested. We walked out in the evening, and found Ferrara enchanting. Of all the places I have seen in Italy, it is the one by far I should most covet to live in. It is the *ideal* of an Italian city, once great, now a shadow of itself. Whichever way you turn, you are struck with picturesque beauty and faded splendours, but with nothing squalid, mean, or vulgar. The grass grows in the well-paved streets. You look down long avenues of buildings, or of garden walls, with summer-houses or fruit-trees projecting over them, and airy palaces with dark portraits gleaming through the

grated windows—you turn, and a chapel bounds your view one way, a broken arch another, at the end of the vacant, glimmering, fairy perspective. You are in a dream, in the heart of a romance; you enjoy the most perfect solitude, that of a city which was once filled with "the busy hum of men," and of which the tremulous fragments at every step strike the sense, and call up reflection. In short, nothing is to be seen of Ferrara, but the remains, graceful and romantic, of what it was—no sordid object intercepts or sullies the retrospect of the past—it is not degraded and patched up like Rome, with upstart improvements, with earthenware and oil-shops; it is a classic vestige of antiquity, drooping into peaceful decay, a sylvan suburb—

> "Where buttress, wall and tower
> Seem fading fast away
> From human thoughts and purposes,
> To yield to some transforming power,
> And blend with the surrounding trees."

Here Ariosto lived—here Tasso occupied first a palace, and then a dungeon. Verona has even a more sounding name; boasts a finer situation, and contains the tomb of Juliet. But the same tender melancholy grace does not hang upon its walls, nor hover round its precincts as round those of Ferrara, inviting to endless leisure and pensive musing. Ferrara, while it was an independent state, was a flourishing and wealthy city, and contained 70,000

inhabitants; but from the time it fell into the hands of the Popes, in 1597, it declined, and it has now little more than an historical and poetical being.

From Ferrara we proceeded through Rovigo to Padua *the Learned*, where we were more fortunate in our inn, and where, in the fine open square at the entrance, I first perceived the rage for vulgar and flaunting statuary, which distinguishes the Lombardo-Venetian States. The traveller to Venice (who goes there to see the masterpieces of Titian or Palladio's admired designs), runs the gauntlet all the way along at every town or villa he passes, of the most clumsy, affected, paltry, sprawling figures, cut in stone, that ever disgraced the chisel. Even their crucifixes and common Madonnas are in bad taste and proportion. This inaptitude for the representation of forms in a people, whose eye for colours transcended that of all the world besides, is striking as it is curious: and it would be worth the study of a man's whole life to give a true and satisfactory solution of the mystery. Padua, though one of the oldest towns in Italy, is still a place of some resort and bustle; among other causes, from the number of Venetian families who are in the habit of spending the summer months there. Soon after leaving it, you begin to cross the canals and rivers which intersect this part of the country bordering upon the sea, and for some miles you follow the course of the Brenta along a flat, dusty, and unprofitable road. This is a period of considerable and

painful suspense, till you arrive at Fusina, where you are put into a boat and rowed down one of the *Lagunes*, where over banks of high rank grass and reeds, and between solitary sentry-boxes at different intervals, you see Venice rising from the sea. For an hour and a half, that it takes you to cross from the last point of land to this Spouse of the Adriatic, its long line of spires, towers, churches, wharfs is stretched along the water's edge, and you view it with a mixture of awe and incredulity. A city built in the air would be something still more wonderful; but any other must yield the palm to this for singularity and imposing effect. If it were on the firm land, it would rank as one of the first cities in Europe for magnificence, size, and beauty; as it is, it is without a rival. I do not know what Lord Byron and Lady Morgan could mean by quarrelling about the question who first called Venice "the Rome of the sea"—since it is perfectly unique in its kind. If a parallel must be found for it, it is more like Genoa shoved into the sea. Genoa stands *on* the sea, this *in* it. The effect is certainly magical, dazzling, perplexing. You feel at first a little giddy: you are not quite sure of your footing as on the deck of a vessel. You enter its narrow, cheerful canals, and find that instead of their being scooped out of the earth, you are gliding amidst rows of palaces and under broad-arched bridges, piled on the sea-green wave. You begin to think that you must cut your liquid way in this manner through the

whole city, and use oars instead of feet. You land, and visit quays, squares, market-places, theatres, churches, halls, palaces; ascend tall towers, and stroll through shady gardens, without being once reminded that you are not on *terra firma*. The early inhabitants of this side of Italy, driven by Attila and his hordes of Huns from the land, sought shelter in the sea, built there for safety and liberty, laid the first foundations of Venice in the rippling wave, and commerce, wealth, luxury, arts, and crimson conquest crowned the growing Republic;—

"And Ocean smil'd,
Well pleased to see his wondrous child."

Man, proud of his amphibious creation, spared no pains to aggrandize and embellish it, even to extravagance and excess. The piles and blocks of wood on which it stands are brought from the huge forests at Treviso and Cadore: the stones that girt its circumference, and prop its walls, are dug from the mountains of Istria and Dalmatia: the marbles that inlay its palace-floors are hewn from the quarries near Verona. Venice is loaded with ornament, like a rich city-heiress with jewels. It seems the natural order of things. Her origin was a wonder: her end is to surprise. The strong, implanted tendency of her genius must be to the showy, the singular, the fantastic. Herself an anomaly, she reconciles contradictions, liberty with aristocracy, commerce with nobility, the want of titles with the pride of birth

and heraldry. A violent birth in nature, she lays greedy, perhaps ill-advised, hands on all the artificial advantages that can supply her original defects. Use turns to gaudy beauty; extreme hardship to intemperance in pleasure. From the level uniform expanse that forever encircles her, she would obviously affect the aspiring in forms, the quaint, the complicated, relief and projection. The richness and foppery of her architecture arise from this; its stability and excellence probably from another circumstance counteracting this tendency to the buoyant and fluttering, *viz.*, the necessity of raising solid edifices on such slippery foundations, and of not playing tricks with stone-walls upon the water. Her eye for colours and costume she would bring with conquest from the East. The spirit, intelligence, and activity of her men, she would derive from their ancestors: the grace, the glowing animation and bounding step of her women, from the sun and mountain-breeze! The want of simplicity and severity in Venetian taste seems owing to this, that all here is factitious and the work of art: redundancy again is an attribute of commerce, whose eye is gross and large, and does not admit of the *too much*; and as to irregularity and want of fixed principles, we may account by analogy at least for these, from that element of which Venice is the nominal bride, to which she owes her all, and the very essence of which is caprice, uncertainty, and vicissitude!

"And now from out the watery floor
A city rose, and well she wore
Her beauty, and stupendous walls,
And towers that touched the stars, and halls
Pillar'd with whitest marble, whence
Palace on lofty palace sprung:
And over all rich gardens hung,
Where, amongst silver water-falls,
Cedars and spice-trees, and green bowers,
And sweet winds playing with all the flowers
Of Persia and of Araby,
Walked princely shapes; some with an air
Like warriors; some like ladies fair
Listening . . . . . .
In supreme magnificence."

This, which is a description of a dream of Babylon of old, by a living poet, is realized almost literally in modern Venice.

CHAPTER XXIII.

I NEVER saw palaces anywhere but at Venice. Those at Rome are dungeons compared to them. They generally come down to the water's edge, and as there are canals on each side of them, you see them *four-square*. The views by Canaletti are very like, both for the effect of the buildings and the hue of the water. The principal are by Palladio, Longhena, and Sansovino. They are massy, elegant, well-proportioned, costly in materials, profuse of ornament. Perhaps if they were raised above the water's edge on low terraces (as some of them are), the appearance of comfort and security would be greater, though the architectural daring, the poetical miracle would appear less. As it is, they seem literally to be suspended in the water.—The richest in interior decoration that I saw, was the Grimani Palace, which answered to all the imaginary conditions of this sort of thing. Aladdin might have exchanged his for it, and given his lamp into the bargain. The floors are of marble, the tables of precious stones, the chairs and curtains of rich silk, the walls covered with looking-glasses, and it contains a cabinet of invaluable antique sculpture, and some of Titian's finest portraits. I never knew the practical

amount to the poetical, or furniture seem to grow eloquent but in this instance. The rooms were not too large for comfort neither; for space is a consideration at Venice. All that it wanted of an Eastern Palace was light and air, with distant vistas of hill and grove. A genealogical tree of the family was hung up in one of the rooms, beginning with the founder in the ninth century, and ending with the present representative of it; and one of the portraits, by Titian, was of a Doge of the family, looking just like an ugly, spiteful old woman; but with a truth of nature, and a force of character that no one ever gave but he. I saw no other mansion equal to this. The Pisani is the next to it for elegance and splendour; and from its situation on the Grand Canal, it admits a flood of bright day through glittering curtains of pea-green silk, into a noble saloon, enriched with an admirable family-picture, by Paul Veronese, with heads equal to Titian for all but the character of thought.

Close to this is the Barberigo Palace, in which Titian lived, and in which he died, with his painting-room just in the state in which he left it. It is hung round with pictures, some of his latest works, such as the Magdalen and the Salvator Mundi (which are common in prints), and with an unfinished sketch of St. Sebastian, on which he was employed at the time of his death. Titian was ninety-nine when he died, and was at last carried off by the plague. My guide

who was enthusiastic on the subject of Venetian art, would not allow any falling-off in these latest efforts of his mighty pencil, but represented him as prematurely cut off in the height of his career. He knew, he said, an old man, who had died a year ago, at one hundred and twenty. The Venetians may still live to be old, but they do not paint like Titian! The Magdalen is imposing and expressive, but the colouring is tinted (quite different from Titian's usual simplicity) and it has a flaccid, meretricious, affectedly lachrymose appearance, which I by no means like. There is a slabbery freedom or a stiff grandeur about most of these productions, which, I think, savoured of an infirm hand and eye, accompanied with a sense of it. Titian, it is said, thought he improved to the last, and wished to get possession of his former pictures, to paint them over again, upon broader and more scientific principles, as some authors have wished to re-write their works: there was a small model of him in wax, done by a contemporary artist in his extreme old age, shewn in London a year or two ago, with the black velvet cap, the green gown, and a white sleeve appearing from under it, against a pale, shrivelled hand. The arrangement of colouring was so truly characteristic, that it was probably dictated by himself. It may be interesting to artists to be told, that the room in the Barberigo Palace (said to be his painting-room) has nearly a southern aspect. There are some other indifferent pictures hanging in the room, by painters

before his time, probably some that he had early in his possession, and kept longest for that reason. It is an event in one's life to find one's-self in Titian's painting-room. Yet it did not quite answer to my expectations—a hot sun shone into the room, and the gondola in which we came was unusually close—neither did I stoop and kiss the stone which covers his dust, though I have worshipped him on this side of idolatry!

"Qui giace il gran Titiano Vecelli,
Emulator de' Zeusi e degl'Apelli."

This is the inscription on his tomb in the church of the Frati. I read it twice over, but it would not do. Why grieve for the immortals? One is not exactly one's-self on such occasions, and enthusiasm has its intermittent and stubborn fits; besides, mine is, at present, I suspect, a kind of July shoot, that must take its rise from the stock of former impressions. It spread aloft on the withered branches of the St. Peter Martyr, and shot out more kindly still from seeing three pictures of his, close together, at the house of Signor Manfrini (a Venetian tobacconist), an elaborate Portrait of his friend Ariosto—sharp-featured and tawny-coloured, with a light Morisco look—a bronzed duplicate of the Four Ages at the Marquess of Stafford's—and his Mistress (which is in the Louvre) introduced into a composition with a gay cavalier and a page. I was glad to see her in company so much fitter for her than her old lover; and besides, the

varied grouping gave new life and reality to this charming vision. The two last pictures are doubtfully ascribed to Giorgioni, and this critical equivoque was a source of curiosity and wonder. Giorgioni is the only painter with respect to whom this could be made a question (the distinction between Titian and the other painters of the Venetian school, Tintoret and Paul Veronese, is broad and palpable enough)—and for myself, I incline to attribute the last of the three *chef d'œuvres* above enumerated to Giorgioni. The difference, it appears to me, may be thus stated. There is more glow and animation in Giorgioni than in Titian. He is of a franker and more genial spirit. Titian has more subtilty and meaning, Giorgioni more life and youthful blood. The feeling in the one is suppressed; in the other, it is overt and transparent. Titian's are set portraits, with the smallest possible deviation from the straight line: they look as if they were going to be shot, or to shoot somebody. Giorgioni, in what I have seen of his pictures, as the Gaston de Foix, the Music-piece at Florence, &c. is full of inflection and contrast; there is seldom a particle of it in Titian. An appearance of silence, a tendency to still-life, pervades Titian's portraits; in Giorgioni's there is a bending attitude, and a flaunting air, as if floating in gondolas or listening to music. For all these reasons (perhaps slenderly put together) I am disposed to think the portrait of the young man in the picture alluded to is by Giorgioni, from the flushed

cheek, the good-natured smile, and the careless attitude; and for the same reason, I think it likely that even the portrait of the lady is originally his, and that Titian copied and enlarged the design into the one we see in the Louvre, for the head (supposed to be of himself, in the background) is middle-aged, and Giorgioni died while Titian was yet young. The question of priority in this case is a very nice one; and it would be curious to ascertain the truth by tradition or private documents of any kind.

I teazed my *valet de place* (Mr. Andrew Wyche, a Tyrolese, a very pleasant, companionable, and patriotic sort of person) the whole of the first morning at every fresh landing or embarkation by asking, "But are we going to see the Saint Peter Martyr?" When we reached the Church of Saint John and Saint Paul, the light did not serve, and we got reprimanded by the priest for turning our backs on the host, in our anxiety to find a proper point of view. We returned to the charge at five in the afternoon, when the light fell upon it through a high-arched Gothic window, and it came out in all its pristine glory, with its rich, embrowned, overshadowing trees, its nobly-drawn heroic figures, its blood-stained garments, its flowers and trailing plants, and that cold convent-spire rising in the distance amidst the sapphire mountains and the golden sky. I found every thing in its place and as I expected. Yet I am unwilling to say that I saw it through my former impressions: this picture suffices

to itself, and fills the mind without an effort; for it contains all the mighty world of landscape and history, grandeur and breadth of form with the richest depth of colouring, an expression characteristic, powerful, that cannot be mistaken, conveying the scene at the moment, a masterly freedom and unerring truth of execution, and a subject as original as it is stately and romantic. It is the foremost of Titian's productions, and exhibits the most extraordinary specimen of his varied powers. Most probably, as a picture, it is the finest in the world; or if I cannot say it is the picture which I would the soonest have painted, it is at least the one which I would the soonest have. It is a rich feast to the eye, "where no crude surfeit reigns." As an instance of the difference between Titian and Raphael, you here see the figures from below, and they stand out with noble grandeur of effect against the sky; Raphael would have buried them under the horizon, or stuck them against the landscape, without relief or motion. So much less knowledge had he of the picturesque! Again, I do not think Raphael could have given the momentary expression of sudden, ghastly terror, or the hurried, disorderly movements of the flying Monk, or the entire prostration of the other (like a rolling ruin) so well as Titian. The latter could not, I know, raise a sentiment to its height like the former; but Raphael's expressions and attitudes were (so to speak) the working out of "foregone conclusions," not the accidental fluctuations of

mind or matter—were final and fixed*, not salient or variable. I observed, in looking closer, that the hinder or foreshortened leg of the flying monk rests upon the edge of a bank of earth, from which he is descending. This explains the action of the part better, but I doubt whether this idea of inequality and interruption from the broken nature of the ground is an addition to the feeling of precipitate fear and staggering perplexity in the mind of the person represented. This may be an hypercriticism. The colouring of the foremost leg of this figure is sufficient to prove that the utter paleness of the rest of it is from its having faded in the course of time. The colour of the face in this and the other monk is the same as it was twenty years ago; it has sustained no injury in that time. But for the sun-burnt, well-baked, robust tone of the flesh-colour, commend me to the leg and girded thigh of the robber. What a difference between this and Raphael's brick-dust!—I left this admirable performance with regret; yet I do not see why; for I have it present with me, "in my mind's eye," and, swear, in the wildest scenes of the Alps, that the St. Peter Martyr is finer. That, and the Man in the Louvre, are my standards of perfection; my taste may be wrong; nay, even ridiculous—yet such it is.

The picture of the Assumption, at the Academy of

* See even the Ananias, Elymas, and others, which might be thought exceptions.

Painting at Venice, which was discovered but the other day under a load of dirt and varnish, is cried up as even superior to the St. Peter: it is indeed a more extraordinary picture for the artist to have painted; but for that very reason it is neither so perfect nor so valuable. Raphael could not paint landscape; Titian could hardly paint history without the help of landscape. A background was necessary to him, like music to a melodrame. He has in this picture attempted the style of Raphael, and has succeeded and even failed—to admiration. He has given the detached figures of the Roman school, the contrasted, uniform colours of their draperies, the same determined outline, no breaking of the colours or play of light and shade, and has aimed at the same elevation and force of expression. The drawing has nearly the same firmness with more scope, the colouring is richer and almost as hard, the attitudes are imposing and significant, and the features handsome—what then is wanting? That glow of heavenward devotion bent on ideal objects, and taking up its abode in the human form and countenance as in a shrine; that high and abstracted expression, that outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace, which Raphael alone could give in its utmost purity and intensity. One glimpse of the Crowning of the Virgin in the Vatican is worth it all—lifts the mind nigher to the subject, dissolves it in greater sweetness, sinks it in deeper thoughtfulness. The eager headlong enthusiasm of the

Apostle to the right in a green mantle is the best; the lambent eyes and suffused glow of the St. John are only the indications of rosy health, and youthful animation; the Virgin is a well-formed rustic beauty with a little affectation, and the attitude of the Supreme Being is extravagant and distorted. Raphael could have painted this subject, as to its essential qualities, better; he could not have done the St. Peter Martyr in any respect so well. I like Titian's Martyrdom of St. Lawrence (notwithstanding the horror of the subject) better than the Assumption, for its characteristic expression, foreshortening, and fine mellow masses of light and shade. Titian could come nearer the manner of Michael Angelo than that of Raphael, from an eye for what was grand and impressive in outward form and position, as his frescoes of Prometheus, Cain and Abel, and another grotesque and gigantic subject on the ceiling of one of the churches, shew. These, in picturesque grouping, in muscular relief, and vastness of contour, surpass Michael Angelo's figures in the Last Judgment, however they may fall short of them in anatomical knowledge or accuracy. I also was exceedingly delighted with the Salutation of the Virgin at the Academy, which is shewn as one of his masterpieces, for the mixture of airy scenic effect with the truth of individual portraiture. The churches and public buildings here bear ample testimony to the powers of Titian's historic pencil, though I did not see enough

of his portraits in private collections, of which I had hoped to take my fill. In the large hall of the Academy of Painting are also the fine picture of the Miracle of Saint Mark by Tintoret, an inimitable representation of a religious and courtly ceremony by Paris Bourbon (inimitable for the light, rich gauze-colouring, and magical effect of the figures in perspective), and several others of vast merit as well as imposing dimensions. The Doge's Palace and the Council-Chamber of the Senate are adorned with the lavish performances of Tintoret and Paul Veronese; and in the allegorical figures in the ceiling of the Council-Chamber, and in the splendid delineation of a Doge returning thanks to the Virgin for some victory over the Infidels, which occupies the end of it, I think the last-named painter has reached the top of his own and of Venetian art. As an art of decoration, addressing itself to the eye, to the vain or voluptuous part of our constitution, it cannot be carried farther. Of all pictures this Thanksgiving is the most dazzling, the most florid. A rainbow is not more rich in hues, a bubble that glitters in the sun is not more light and glossy, a bed of tulips is not more gaudy. A flight of angels with rosy hues and winged glories connects the heavenly and the earthly groups like a garland of blushing flowers. The skill and delicacy of this composition is equal to its brilliancy of effect. His Marriage of Cana (another wonderful performance) is still at Paris: it was formerly in the Refectory of the

church of St. Giorgio Maggiore, on an island on the opposite side of the harbour, which is well worth attention for the architecture by Palladio and the altar-piece in bronze by John of Bologna, containing a number of figures (as it appears to me) of the most masterly design and execution.

I have thus hastily run through what struck me as most select in fine art in this celebrated city. To enumerate every thing would be endless. There are other objects for the curious. The Mosaics of the church of St. Mark, the Brazen Horses, the belfry or Campanile, the arsenal, and the theatres, which are wretched both as it relates to the actors and the audience. The shops are exceedingly neat and well-stocked, and the people gay and spirited. The harbour does not present an appearance of much traffic. In the times of the Republic, 30,000 people are said to have slept every night in the vessels in the bay. Daniell's Hotel, at which we were, and to which I would recommend every English traveller, commands a superb view of it, and the scene (particularly by moonlight) is delicious. I heard no music at Venice, neither voice nor lute; saw no group of dancers or maskers, and the gondolas appear to me to resemble hearses more than pleasure-boats. I saw the Rialto, which is no longer an Exchange. The Bridge of Sighs, of which Lord Byron speaks, is not a thoroughfare, but an arch suspended at a considerable height over one of the canals, and connecting the Doge's palace with the prison.

CHAPTER XXIV.

We left Venice with mingled satisfaction and regret. We had to retrace our steps as far as Padua, on our way to Milan. For four days' journey, from Padua to Verona, to Brescia, to Treviglio, to Milan, the whole way was cultivated beauty and smiling vegetation. Not a rood of land lay neglected, nor did there seem the smallest interruption to the bounty of nature or the industry of man. The constant verdure fatigued the eye, but soothed reflection. For miles before you, behind you, and on each side, the trailing vines hung over waving corn-fields, or clear streams meandered through rich meadow-grounds, and pastures. The olive we had nearly left behind us in Tuscany, and were not sorry to part with its half-mourning appearance amidst more luxuriant scenes and various foliage. The country is quite level, and the roads quite straight for nearly four hundred miles that we had travelled after leaving Bologna; and every foot or acre of this immense plain is wrought up to a pitch of neatness and productiveness, equal to that of a gentleman's kitchen-garden, or to the nursery-grounds in the neighbourhood of London. A gravel-pit or a furze-bush by the roadside is a relief to the eye. There is no perceptible difference in ap-

proaching the great towns, though their mounds of green earth and the mouldering remains of fortifications give an agreeable and romantic variety to the scene; the whole of the intermediate space is literally, and without any kind of exaggeration, one continued and delightful garden. Whether this effect is owing to the felicity of the soil and climate, or to the art of man, or to former good government, or to all these combined, I shall not here inquire; but the fact is so, and it is sufficient to put an end to the idea that there is neither industry nor knowledge of agriculture nor plenty out of England, and to the common proverbial cant about the sloth and apathy of the Italians, as if they would not lift the food to their mouths, or gather the fruits that are dropping into them. If the complaints of the poverty and wretchedness of Italy are confined to the Campagna of Rome, or to some districts of the Apennines, I have nothing to say; but if a sweeping conclusion is drawn from these to Italy in general, or to the North of it in particular, I must enter my protest against it. Such an inference is neither philosophical, nor, I suspect, patriotic. The English are too apt to take every opportunity, and to seize on every pretext for treating the rest of the world as wretches—a tone of feeling which does not exactly tend to enhance our zeal in the cause either of liberty or humanity. If people are wretches, the next impression is that they deserve to be so; and we are thus prepared to lend a

helping hand to make them what we say they are. The Northern Italians are as fine a race of people as walk the earth; and all that they want, to be what they once were, or that any people is capable of becoming, is neither English abuse nor English assistance, but three words spoken to the other powers; "Let them alone!" But England, in the dread that others should follow her example, has quite forgotten what she herself once was. Another idea that the aspect of this country and of the country-people suggests, is the fallacy of some of Mr. Malthus's theories. The soil is here cultivated to the greatest possible degree, and yet it seems to lead to no extraordinary excess of population. Plenty and comfort abound; but they are not accompanied by an appearance of proportionable want and misery, tracking them at the heels. The present generation of farmers and peasants seem well off; the last, probably, were so: this circumstance, therefore, does not appear to have given any overweening presumptuous activity, or headstrong impulse to the principle of population, nor to have determined those fortunate possessors of a land flowing with milk and honey, from an acquaintance with the good things of this life, to throw all away at one desperate cast, and entail famine, disease, vice, and misery on themselves and their immediate descendants. It is not, however, my intention to enter into politics or statistics: let me, therefore, escape from them.

We reached Verona the second day: it is delightfully situated. Mr. Addison has given a very beautiful description of the Giusti gardens which overlook it on one side. They here shew you the tomb of Juliet: it looks like an empty cistern in a common court-yard: you look round, however, and the carved niches with the frescoes on the walls convince you that you are in the precincts of an ancient monastery. The guide also points to the part of the wall that Romeo leaped over, and takes you to the spot in the garden where he fell. This gives an air of trick and fiction to the whole. The tradition is a thousand years old: it is kept up with a tender and pious awe: the interest taken in the story of a passion faithful to death shews not that the feeling is rare, but common. Many Italian women have read Shakspeare's tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, admire and criticise it with great feeling. What remains of the old monastery is at present a Foundling Hospital. On returning from this spot, which is rather low and gloomy, we witnessed the most brilliant sight we had seen in Italy—the sun setting in a flood of gold behind the Alps that overlook the lake of Garda. The Adige foamed at our feet below; the bank opposite was of pure emerald; the hills which rose directly behind it in the most fantastic forms were of perfect purple, and the arches of the bridge to the left seemed plunged in ebon darkness by the flames of light that darted round them. Verona has a less dilapidated, pensive air than Ferrara.

Its streets and squares are airy and spacious; but the buildings have a more modern and embellished look, and there is an appearance of greater gaiety and fashion among the inhabitants. The English sometimes come here to reside, though not in such crowds as at Florence, and things are proportionably less dear. The Amphitheatre is nearly as fine and quite as entire as that at Rome: the Gate of Galienas terminates one of the principal streets. We met with nothing remarkable the rest of the way to Milan, except the same rich, unvaried face of the country; the distant Alps hanging like a thin film over the horizon, or approaching nearer in lofty, solid masses as we advanced; the lake of Garda embosomed in them, and the fine fortress of Peschiera buried in its almost subterranean fastnesses like a mole; the romantic town of Virli, with a rainbow glittering over its verdant groves and hills; a very bad inn at Brescia, and a very excellent one at Treviglio. Milan was alive and full of visitors, thick as the "motes that people the sun-beam;" it felt the presence of its lord. The Emperor of Austria was there! Milan (at least no this occasion) was as gay as Bath or any town in England. How times and the characters of countries change with them! In other parts of Italy, as at Rome and at Florence, the business of the inhabitants seemed to be to hide themselves, neither to see nor be seen: here it was evidently their object to do both. The streets were thronged and in motion, and the

promenades full of carriages and of elegantly-dressed women, as on a festival or gala-day. I think I never saw so many well-grown, well-made, good-looking women as at Milan. I did not however see one face strikingly beautiful, or with a very fine expression. In this respect the Romans have the advantage of them. The North has a tinge of robust barbarism in it. Their animation was a little exuberant; their look almost amounts to a stare, their walk is a swing, their curiosity is not free from an air of defiance. The free and unrestrained manners of former periods of Italy appear also to have been driven northward, and to have lingered longer on the confines. The Cathedral or Duomo is a splendid fabric of white marble: it is rich, vast, and the inside solemn and full of a religious awe: the marble is from a quarry on the Lago Maggiore. We also saw the celebrated theatre of the Gran Scala, which is of an immense size and of extreme beauty, but it was not full, nor was the performance striking. The manager is the proprietor of the Cobourg Theatre (Mr. Glossop), and his wife (formerly our Miss Fearon) the favourite singer of the Milanese circles. I inquired after the great pantomime Actress, Pallarini, but found she had retired from the stage on a fortune. The name of Vigano was not known to my informant. I did not see the great picture of the Last Supper by Lionardo nor the little Luini, two miles out of Milan, which my friend Mr. Beyle charged me particularly to see.

We left Milan, in a calash or small open carriage, to proceed to the Isles Borromees. The first day it rained violently, and the third day the boy drove us wrong, pretending to mistake Laveno for Baveno; so I got rid of him. We had a delightful morning at Como, and a fine view of the lake and surrounding hills, which however rise too precipitously from the shores to be a dwelling-place for any but hunters and fishermen. Several English gentlemen as well as rich Milanese have villas on the banks. I had a hankering after Cadenobia; but the Simplon still lay before me. We were utterly disappointed in the Isles Borromees. Isola Bella, belonging to the Marquis Borromeo, indeed resembles "a pyramid of sweetmeats ornamented with green festoons and flowers." I had supposed this to be a heavy German conceit, but it is a literal description. The pictures in the Palace are trash. We were accosted by a beggar in an island which contains only a palace and an inn. We proceeded to the inn at Baveno, situated on the high road, close to the lake, and enjoyed for some days the enchanting and varied scenery along its banks. The abrupt rocky precipices that overhang it—the woods that wave in its refreshing breeze—the distant hills—the gliding sails and level shore at the opposite extremity—the jagged summits of the mountains that look down upon Palanza and Feriole, and the deep defiles and snowy passes of the Simplon, every kind of sublimity or beauty, changing every moment with the

shifting light or point of view from which you beheld them. We were tempted to stop here for the summer in a suite of apartments (not ill furnished) that command a panoramic view of the lake hidden by woods and vineyards from all curious eyes, or in a similar set of rooms at Intra on the other side of the lake, with a garden and the conveniences of a market-town, for six guineas for the half year. Hear this, ye who pine in England on limited incomes, and with a taste for the picturesque! The temptation was great, and may yet prove too strong. We wished, however, to pass the Simplon first. We proceeded to Domo d' Ossola for this purpose, and the next day began the ascent. I have already attempted to describe the passage of Mont Cenis: this is said to be finer, and I believe it; but it impressed me less, I believe owing to circumstances. The road does not wind its inconceivable breathless way down the side of the same mountain (like the circumgirations of an eagle), gallery seeing gallery sunk beneath it, but makes longer reaches, and passes over from one side of the valley to the other. The ascent is nearly by the side of the brook of the Simplon for several miles, and you pass along by the edge of precipices and by slender bridges over mountain-torrents, under huge brown rugged rocks, hanging over the road like mighty masses of ruins or castle walls—some bare, others covered with pine-trees to the top; some too steep for any plant to grow on them, others displaying spots of verdure,

the thatched cottage, and the winding path half-way up, and dallying with vernal flowers and the winter's snow to the last moment. The fir generally clothes them, and its spiry form and dark hues combine well with their "star-ypointing pyramids," and ashy paleness. The eagle screams over-head, and the chamois looks startled round. Half-way up a little rugged path (the pathway of their life) loitered a young peasant and his mistress hand in hand, with some older people behind, following to their peaceful humble home—half hid among the cliffs and clouds. We passed under one or two sounding arches, and over some lofty bridges. At length we reached the village of the Simplon, and stopped there at a most excellent inn, where we had a supper that might vie, for taste and elegance, with that with which Chiffinch entertained Peveril of the Peak and his companion at the little inn, in the wilds of Derbyshire. The next day we proceeded onwards, and passed the commencement of the tremendous glacier of the Flech Horr. Monteroso ascended to the right, shrouded in cloud and mist, at a height inaccessible even to the eye. This mountain is only a few hundred feet lower than Mont-Blanc, yet its name is hardly known. So a difference of a hair's breadth in talent often makes all the difference between total obscurity and endless renown! We soon after passed the barrier, and found ourselves involved in fog and driving sleet upon the brink of precipices: the view was hidden, the road dangerous. On our right

were drifts of snow left there by the avalanches. Soon after the mist dispersed, or we had perhaps passed below it, and a fine sunny morning disclosed the whole amazing scene above, about, below us. On our right was the Swartzenberg, behind us the Simplon, on our left the Flech Horr, and the pointed Clise-Horn —opposite was the Yung-Frow, and the distant mountains of the lake of Geneva rose between, circled with wreaths of mist and sunshine: stately fir-trees measured the abrupt descent at our side, or the sound of dimly-seen cataracts; and in an opening below, seen through the steep chasm under our feet, lay the village of Brigg (as in a map) still half a day's journey distant. We wound round the valley at the other extremity of it: the road on the opposite side, which we could plainly distinguish, seemed almost on the level ground, and when we reached it we found a still greater depth below us. Villages, cottages, flocks of sheep in the valley underneath, now came in sight, and made the eye giddy to look at them: huge cedars by the road-side were interposed between us and the rocks and mountains opposite, and threw them into half-tint; and the height above our heads, and that beneath our feet, by being perceptibly joined together, doubled the elevation of the objects. Mountains seem highest either when you are at their very summits and look down on the world, or when you are midway up, and the eye takes in the measure of their height at two distinct stages. I think the finest part of the descent of the Simplon is

about four or five miles before you come to Brigg. The valley is here narrow, and affords prodigious contrasts of wood and rock, of hill and vale, of sheltered beauty and of savage grandeur. The red perpendicular chasm in the rock at the foot of the Clise-Horn is tremendous; the look back to the snow-clad Swartzenberg that you have left behind is no less so. I grant the Simplon has the advantage of Mont Cenis in variety and beauty and in sudden and terrific contrasts; but it has not the same simple expansive grandeur, blending and growing into one vast accumulated impression; nor is the descent of the same whirling and giddy character, as if you were hurried, stage after stage, and from one yawning depth to another, into the regions of "Chaos and old Night." The Simplon presents more picturesque points of view; Mont Cenis makes a stronger impression on the imagination. I am not prejudiced in favour of one or the other; the road over each was raised by the same master-hand. After a jaunt like this through the air, it was requisite to pause some time at the hospitable inn at Brigg to recover. It only remains for me to describe the lake of Geneva and Mont Blanc.

CHAPTER XXV.

WE left the inn at Brigg, after having stopped there above a week, and proceeded on our way to Vevey, which had always been an interesting point in the horizon, and a resting-place to the imagination. In travelling, we visit *names* as well as places; and Vevey is the scene of the *New Eloise*. In spite of Mr. Burke's philippic against this performance, the contempt of the *Lake School*, and Mr. Moore's late *Rhymes on the Road*, I had still some overmastering recollections on that subject, which I proposed to indulge at my leisure on the spot which was supposed to give them birth, and which I accordingly did. I did not, on a re-perusal, find my once favourite work quite so vapid, quite so void of eloquence or sentiment as some critics (it is true, not much beholden to it) would insinuate. The following passage, among others, seemed to me the perfection of style:—"*Mais vois la rapidité de cet astre, qui vole et ne s'arrête jamais; le tems fuit, l'occasion echappe, ta beauté, ta beauté même aura son terme, elle doit flétrir et périr un jour comme un fleur qui tombe sans avoir été cueilli!*" What a difference between the sound of this passage and of Mr. Moore's verse or prose! Nay,

there is more imagination in the single epithet *astre*, applied as it is here to this brilliant and fleeting scene of things, than in all our fashionable poet's writings! At least I thought so, reading St. Preux's Letter in the wood near Clarens, and stealing occasional glances at the lake and rocks of Meillerie. But I am anticipating.

The mountains on either side of the Valley of the Simplon present a gloomy succession of cliffs, often covered with snow, and contrasting by no means agreeably with the marshy grounds below, through which the Rhone wanders scarce noticed, scarce credited. It is of a whitish muddy colour (from the snow and sand mingled with its course, very much as if it had been poured out of a washing-tub), and very different from the deep purple tint it assumes on oozing out from the other side of the Lake, after having drank its cerulean waters. The woods near the lofty peaks of the Clise-Horn, and bordering on Monteroso, are said to be still the frequent haunt of bears, though a price is set upon their heads. As we advanced farther on beyond Tortomania, the whole breadth of the valley was sometimes covered with pine-forests, which gave a relief to the eye, and afforded scope to the imagination. The fault of mountain scenery in general is, that it is too barren and naked, and that the whole is exposed in enormous and unvarying masses to the view at once. The clothing of trees is no less wanted as an ornament than par-

tially to conceal objects, and thus present occasional new points of view. Without something to intercept and break the aggregate extent of surface, you gain no advantage by change of place; the same elevation and ground-plan of hill and valley are still before you —you might as well carry a map or landscape in your hand. In this part of our journey, however, besides the natural wildness and grandeur of the scenery, the road was rough and uneven, and frequently crossed rude bridges over the Rhone, or over rivulets pouring into it: the gloomy recesses of the forests might be the abode of wild beasts or of the lurking robber. The huge fragments of rock that had tumbled from the overhanging precipices often made a turning in the road necessary, and for a moment interrupted the view beyond; the towns, built on the sides of the hills, resembled shattered heaps of rock, scarcely distinguishable from the grey peaks and crags with which they were surrounded, giving an agreeable play to the fancy; while the snowy tops of the Simplon mountains, now coming in sight, now hidden behind the nearer summits, threw us back to the scenes we had left, and measured the distance we had traversed. The way in which these mighty landmarks of the Alpine regions ascertain this point is, however, contrary to the usual one: for it is by appearing plainer, the farther you retire from them. They tower with airy shape and dazzling whiteness above the lengthening perspective; and it is the intervening objects that

dwindle in the comparison, and are lost sight of in succession. In the midst of the most lonely and singular part of this scene, just as we passed a loose bridge of rough fir-planks over a brawling brook, and as a storm seemed to threaten us, we met a party of English gentlemen in an open carriage, though their courteous looks and waving salutation almost "forbade us to interpret them such." Certainly there is no people in whom urbanity is more a duty than the English; for there is no people that feel it more. Travelling confounds our ideas, not of place only, but of time; and I could not help making a sudden transition from the party we had by chance encountered to the Chevalier Grandison and his friends, paying their last visit to Bologna. Pshaw! Why do I indulge in such idle fancies? Yet why in truth should I not, when I am a thousand miles from home, and when every object one meets is like a dream? *Passe pour cela.*

We reached Sion that evening. It is one of the dirtiest and least comfortable towns on the road; nor does the chief inn deserve the epithet so applicable to Swiss inns in general—*simplex munditiis.* It was here that Rousseau, in one of his early peregrinations, was recommended by his landlord to an iron-foundry in the neighbourhood (the smoke of which, I believe, we saw at a little distance), where he would be likely to procure employment, mistaking "the pauper lad" for a journeyman blacksmith. Perhaps the author

of the *Rhymes on the Road* will think it a pity he did not embrace this proposal, instead of forging thunderbolts for kingly crowns. Alas! Mr. Moore would then never have had to write his "Fables for the Holy Alliance." Haunted by some indistinct recollection of this adventure, I asked at the Inn, "If Jean Jacques Rousseau had ever resided in the town?" The waiter himself could not tell, but soon after brought back for answer, "That Monsieur Rousseau had never lived there, but that he had passed through about fourteen years before on his way to Italy, when he had only time to stop to take tea!"—Was this a mere stupid blunder, or one of the refractions of fame, founded on his mission as Secretary to the Venetian Ambassador a hundred years before? There is a tradition in the neighbourhood of Milton's house in York-street, Westminster, that "one Mr. *Milford*, a celebrated poet, formerly lived there!" We set forward the next morning on our way to Martigny, through the most dreary valley possible, and in an absolute strait line for twelve or fifteen miles of level road, which was terminated by the village-spire and by the hills leading to the Great St. Bernard and Mont-Blanc. The wind poured down from these tremendous hills, and blew with unabated fury in our faces the whole way. It was a most unpleasant ride, nor did the accommodations at the inn (the Swan, I think) make us amends. The rooms were cold and empty. It might be supposed that the desolation

without had subdued the imagination to its own hue and quality, so that it rejected all attempts at improvement; that the more niggard Nature had been to it, the more churlish it became to itself; and through habit, neither felt the want of comforts, nor a wish to supply others with them. Close to the bridge stands a steep rock with a castle at the top of it (attributed to the times of the Romans). At a distance it was hardly discernible; and afterwards, when we crossed over to Chamouni, we saw it miles below us like a dove-cot, or a dirt-pye raised by children. Yet viewed from beneath, it seemed to present an imposing and formidable attitude, and to elevate its pigmy front in a line with the stately heights around. So Mr. Washington Irvine binds up his own portrait with Goldsmith's in the Paris edition of his works, and to many people seems the *genteeler* man! From the definite and dwarfish, we turned to the snow-clad and cloud-capt; and strolled to the other side of the village, where the road parts to St. Bernard and Chamouni, anxiously gazing at the steep pathway on either side, and half tempted to launch into that billowy sea of mist and mountain: but we reserved this for a subsequent period. As we were loitering at the foot of the dizzy ascent, our postilion, who had staid behind us a couple of hours the day before to play at bowls, now drove on half an hour before his time, and when we turned a corner which gave us a view of our inn, no cabriolet was

there. He, however, soon found his mistake, and turned back to meet us. The only picturesque objects between this and Bex are a waterfall about two hundred feet in height, issuing through the cavities of the mountain from the immense glacier in the valley of Trie, and the romantic bridge of St. Maurice, the boundary between Savoy and the Pays de Vaud. On the ledge of a rocky precipice, as you approach St. Maurice, stands a hermitage in full view of the road; and possibly the inmate consoles himself in his voluntary retreat by watching the carriages as they come in sight, and fancying that the driver is pointing out his aërial dwelling to the inquisitive and wondering traveller! If a man could transport himself to one of the fixed stars, so far from being lifted above this sublunary sphere, he would still wish his fellow-mortals to point to it as his particular abode, and the scene of his marvellous adventures. We go into a crowd to be seen: we go into solitude that we may be distinguished from the crowd, and talked of. We travel into foreign parts to get the start of those who stay behind us; we return home to hear what has been said of us in our absence. Lord Byron mounted on his pedestal of pride on the shores of the Adriatic, as Mr. Hobhouse rides in the car of popularity through the streets of Westminster. The one object could be seen at a distance; the other, whose mind is more Sancho-Panza-ish and *pug-featured*, requires to be brought nearer to the eye for stage-effect! Bex itself

is delicious. It stands in a little nook of quiet, almost out of the world, nestling in rural beauty, in mountain sublimity. There is an excellent inn, a country church before it, a large ash tree, a circulating library, a rookery, every thing useful and comfortable for the life of man. Behind, there is a ridge of dark rocks; beyond them tall and bare mountains—and a higher range still appears through rolling clouds and circling mists. Our reception at the inn was every way what we could wish, and we were half disposed to stop here for some months. But something whispered me on to Vevey:—this we reached the next day in a drizzling shower of rain, which prevented our seeing much of the country, excepting the black masses of rock and pine-trees that rose perpendicularly from the roadside. The day after my arrival, I found a lodging at a farm-house, a mile out of Vevey, so "lapped in luxury," so retired, so reasonable, and in every respect convenient, that we remained here for the rest of the summer, and felt no small regret at leaving it.

The country round Vevey is, I must nevertheless own, the least picturesque part of the borders of the Lake of Geneva. I wonder Rousseau, who was a good judge and an admirable describer of romantic situations, should have fixed upon it as the scene of the "New Eloise." You have passed the rocky and precipitous defiles at the entrance into the valley, and have not yet come into the open and more agreeable

parts of it. The immediate vicinity of Vevey is entirely occupied with vineyards slanting to the south, and inclosed between stone-walls without any kind of variety or relief. The walks are uneven and bad, and you in general see little (for the walls on each side of you) but the glassy surface of the Lake, the rocky barrier of the Savoy Alps opposite (one of them crowned all the year round with snow, and which, though it is twenty miles off, seems as if you could touch it with your hand, so completely does size neutralize the effect of distance), the green hills of an inferior class over Clarens, with the Dent de Jamant sticking out of them like an iron tooth, and the winding valley leading northward towards Berne and Fribourg. Here stands Gelamont (the name of the *Campagna* which we took), on a bank sloping down to the brook that passes by Vevey, and so entirely embosomed in trees and "upland swells," that it might be called, in poetical phrase, "the peasant's nest." Here every thing was perfectly clean and commodious. The *fermier* or vineyard-keeper, with his family, lived below, and we had six or seven rooms on a floor (furnished with every article or convenience that a London lodging affords), for thirty Napoleons for four months, or about thirty shillings a week. This first expense we found the greatest during our stay, and nearly equal to all the rest, that of a servant included. The number of English settled here had made lodgings dear, and an English

gentleman told me he was acquainted with not less than three-and-twenty English families in the neighbourhood. To give those who may feel an inclination to try foreign air, an idea of the comparative cheapness of living abroad, I will mention that mutton (equal to the best Welch mutton, and fed on the high grounds near Moudon) is two batz, that is, threepence English per pound; and the beef (which is also good, though not of so fine a quality) is the same. Trout, caught in the Lake, you get almost for nothing. A couple of fowls is eighteen-pence. The wine of the country, which though not rich, is exceedingly palatable, is three pence a bottle. You may have a basket of grapes in the season for one shilling or fifteen pence*. The bread, butter and milk are equally cheap and excellent. They have not the art here of adulterating every thing. You find the same things as in England, served up in the same plain and decent manner, but in greater plenty, and generally speaking, of a better and more wholesome quality, and at least twice as cheap. In England they have few things, and they contrive to spoil those few. There is a good deal of ill-nature and churlishness, as well as a narrow policy in this. The trading principle seems to be to give you the worst, and make you pay as dear for it as possible. It is a vile principle. As soon as you land at Dover, you feel the force of this

* The girls who work in the vineyards, are paid three batz a day.

home truth. They cheat you to your face, and laugh at you. I must say, that it appears to me, whatever may be the faults or vices of other nations, the English *population* is the only one to which the epithet *blackguard* is applicable. They are, in a word, the only people who make a merit of giving others pain, and triumph in their impudence and ill-behaviour, as proofs of a manly and independent spirit. Afraid that you may complain of the absence of foreign luxuries, they are determined to let you understand beforehand, they do not care about what you may think, and wanting the art to please, resort to the easier and surer way of keeping up their importance by practising every kind of annoyance. Instead of their being at your mercy, you find yourself at theirs, subjected to the sullen airs of the masters, and to the impertinent fatuity of the waiters. They dissipate your theory of English comfort and hospitality at the threshold. What do they care that you have cherished a fond hope of getting a nice, *snug* little dinner on your arrival, better than any you have had in France? "The French may be d———," is the answer that passes through their minds—"the dinner is good enough, if it is English!" Let us take care, that by assuming an insolent local superiority over all the world, we do not sink below them in every thing, liberty not excepted. While the name of any thing passes current, we may dispense with the reality, and keep the start of the rest of mankind, simply by

asserting that we have it, and treating all foreigners as a set of poor wretches, who neither know how, nor are in truth fit to live! Against this post, alas! John Bull is continually running his head, but as yet without knocking his brains out. The beef-steak which you order at Dover with patriotic tender yearnings for its reputation, is accordingly filled with cinders—the mutton is done to a rag—the soup not eatable—the porter sour—the bread gritty—the butter rancid. Game, poultry, grapes, wine it is in vain to think of; and as you may be mortified at the privation, they punish you for your unreasonable dissatisfaction by giving you cause for it in the mismanagement of what remains*. In the midst of this ill fare you meet with equally bad treatment. While you are trying to digest a tough beef-steak, a fellow comes in and peremptorily demands your fare, on the assurance that you will get your baggage from the clutches of the Custom-house in time to go by the six o'clock coach; and when you find that this is impossible, and that you are to be trundled off at two in the morning, or by the next day's coach, *if* it is not *full*, and complain to that personification of blind justice, an English mob, you hear the arch *slang* reply,

* Since my return I have put myself on a regimen of brown bread, beef, and tea, and have thus defeated the systematic conspiracy carried on against weak digestions. To those accustomed to, and who can indulge in foreign luxuries, this list will seem far from satisfactory.

"Do you think the Gentleman such a fool as to part with his money without knowing why?" and should the natural rejoinder rise to your lips—"Do you take me for a fool, because I did not take you for a rogue?" the defendant immediately stands at bay upon the national character for honesty and morality. "I hope there are no rogues here!" is echoed through the dense atmosphere of English intellect, though but the moment before they had been laughing in their sleeves (or out loud) at the idea of a stranger having been tricked by a townsman. Happy country! equally and stupidly satisfied with its vulgar vices and boasted virtues!

"Oh! for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless continuity of shade!"

Yet to what purpose utter such a wish, since it is impossible to stay there, and the moment you are separated from your fellows, you think better of them, begin to form chimeras with which you would fain compare the realities, find them the same as ever to your cost and shame—

"And disappointed still, are still deceived!"

I found little of this *tracasserie* at Gelamont. Days, weeks, months, and even years might have passed on much in the same manner, with "but the season's difference." We breakfasted at the same hour, and the tea-kettle was always boiling (an excellent thing in housewifery)—a *lounge* in the orchard for an hour

or two, and twice a week we could see the steam-boat creeping like a spider over the surface of the lake; a volume of the Scotch novels (to be had in every library on the Continent, in English, French, German, or Italian, as the reader pleases), or M. Galignani's Paris and London *Observer*, amused us till dinner time; then tea and a walk till the moon unveiled itself, "apparent queen of night," or the brook, swoln with a transient shower, was heard more distinctly in the darkness, mingling with the soft, rustling breeze; and the next morning the song of peasants broke upon refreshing sleep, as the sun glanced among the clustering vine-leaves, or the shadowy hills, as the mists retired from their summits, looked in at our windows. The uniformity of this mode of life was only broken during fifteen weeks that we remained in Switzerland, by the civilities of Monsieur Le Vade, a Doctor of medicine and octagenarian, who had been personally acquainted with Rousseau in his younger days; by some attempts by our neighbours to *lay us under obligations*, by parting with rare curiosities to Monsieur l'Anglois for half their value; and by an excursion to Chamouni, of which I must defer the account to my next.

CHAPTER XXVI.

We crossed over in a boat to St. Gingolph, a little town opposite to Vevey, and proceeded on the other side of the lake to Martigny, from which we could pass over either on foot or by the help of mules to Mont-Blanc. It was a warm day towards the latter end of August, and the hills before us drew their clear outline, and the more distant Alps waved their snowy tops (tinged with golden sunshine) in the gently-undulating surface of the crystal lake. As we approached the Savoy side, the mountains in front, which from Vevey look like a huge battery or flat upright wall, opened into woody recesses, or reared their crests on high; rich streaks of the most exquisite verdure gleamed at their feet, and St. Gingolph came distinctly in view, with its dingy-looking houses and smoking chimneys. It is a small manufacturing town, full of forges and workshops, and the inn is dirty and disagreeable. The contrast to Vevey was striking. But this side of the lake is in the dominions of the King of Sardinia, and cleanliness seems to be in general the virtue of republics, or of free states. There is an air of desolation, sluttishness, and indifference, the instant you cross the water, compared

with the neatness, activity, regularity, and cheerfulness of the Pays de Vaud. We walked out to take a view of the situation, as soon as we had bespoken our room and a supper. It was a brilliant sunset; nor do I recollect having ever beheld so majestic and rich a scene, set off to such advantage. A steep pathway led to a village embayed between two mountains, whose tops towered into the sky: conical hills rose to about half their height, covered with green copses: fields and cottages were seen climbing as it were the sides of others, with cattle feeding; the huge projecting rocks gave new combinations and a new aspect to the most picturesque objects; tall branching trees (ash, or beech, or chesnut) hung from green sloping banks over the road-side, or dipped their foliage in the transparent wave below: their bold luxuriant forms threw the rocks and mountains into finer relief, and elevated them into a higher atmosphere, so that they seemed trembling (another airy world) over our heads. The lake shone like a broad golden mirror, reflecting the thousand dyes of the fleecy purple clouds, while Saint Gingolph, with its clustering habitations, shewed like a dark pitchy spot by its side; and beyond the glimmering verge of the Jura (almost hid in its own brightness) hovered gay wreaths of clouds, fair, lovely, visionary, that seemed not of this world, but brought from some dream of fancy, treasured up from past years, emblems of hope, of joy and smiling regret, that had come to grace a

scene so heavenly, and to bid it a last, lingering farewell. No person can describe the effect; but so in Claude's landscapes the evening clouds drink up the rosy light, and sink into soft repose! Every one who travels into Switzerland should visit this secluded spot, and witness such a sunset, with the heaven stooping its face into the lake on one side, and the mountains, rocks, and woods, lifting earth to heaven on the other. We had no power to leave it or to admire it, till the evening shades stole in upon us, and drew the dusky veil of twilight over it.

We had a pleasant walk the next morning along the side of the lake under the grey cliffs, the green hills and azure sky; now passing under the open gateway of some dilapidated watch-tower that had in former times connected the rocky barrier with the water, now watching the sails of a boat slowly making its way among the trees on the banks of the Rhone, like butterflies expanding their wings in the breeze, or the snowy ridges that seemed close to us at Vevey receding farther into a kind of lofty back-ground as we advanced. The speculation of Bishop Berkeley, or some other philosopher, that distance is measured by motion and not by the sight, is verified here at every step. After going on for hours, and perceiving no alteration in the form or appearance of the object before you, you begin to be convinced that it is out of ordinary calculation, or, in the language of the *Fancy*, an "ugly customer;" and our curiosity once excited,

is ready to magnify every circumstance relating to it to an indefinite extent. The literal impression being discarded as insufficient, the imagination takes out an unlimited letter of credit for all that is possible or wonderful, and what the eye sees is considered thenceforward merely as an imperfect hint, to be amplified and filled up on a colossal scale by the understanding and rules of proportion. To say the truth, you also suffer a change, feel like Lilliputians, and can fancy yourselves transported to a different world, where the dimensions and relations of things are regulated by some unknown law. The inn where we stopped at Vionnax is bad. Beyond this place, the hills at the eastern end of the lake form into an irregular and stupendous amphitheatre; and you pass through long and apparently endless vistas of tall flourishing trees, without being conscious of making much progress. There is a glass-manufactory at Vionnax, which I did not go to see; others who have more curiosity may. It will be there (I dare say) next year for those who choose to visit it: I liked neither its glare nor its heat. The cold icy crags that hang suspended over it have been there a thousand years, and will be there a thousand years to come. Short-lived as we are, let us attach ourselves to the immortal, and scale (assisted by earth's giant brood) the empyrean of pure thought! But the English abroad turn out of their way to see every pettifogging, huckstering object that they could see better at home, and are as *fussy* and fidgetty, with

their smoke-jacks and mechanical inventions among the Alps, as if they had brought Manchester and Sheffield in their pockets! The finest effect along this road is the view of the bridge as you come near St. Maurice. The mountains on either side here descend nearly to a point, boldly and abruptly; the river flows rapidly through the tall arch of the bridge, on one side of which you see an old fantastic turret, and beyond it the hill called the Sugar-loaf, rising up in the centre of immense ranges of mountains, and with fertile and variously-marked plains stretching out in the intervening space. The landscape painter has only to go there, and make a picture of it It is already framed by nature to his hand! I mention this the more, because that kind of *grouping* of objects which is essential to the picturesque, is not always to be found in the most sublime or even beautiful scenes. Nature (so, to speak), uses a larger canvass than man, and where she is greatest and most prodigal of her wealth, often neglects that principle of concentration and contrast which is an indispensable preliminary before she can be translated with effect into the circumscribed language of art. We supped at Martigny, at the Hotel de la Poste (formerly a convent), and the next morning proceeded by the Valley of Trie and the Col de Peaume to Chamouni.

We left the great St. Bernard, and the road by which Buonaparte passed to Marengo, on our left, and Martigny and the Valley of the Simplon directly

behind us. These last were also soon at an immeasurable depth below us; but the summits of the mountains that environed us on all sides, seemed to ascend with us, and to add our elevation to their own. Crags, of which we could only before discern the jutting tops, gradually reared their full stature at our side; and icy masses, one by one, came in sight, emerging from their lofty recesses, like clouds floating in mid-air. All this while a green valley kept us company by the road-side, watered, with gushing rills, interspersed with cottages and well-stocked farms: fine elms and ash grew on the sides of the hills, under the shade of one of which we saw an old peasant asleep. The road, however, was long, rough, and steep; and from the heat of the sun, and the continual interruption of loose stones and the straggling roots of trees, I felt myself exceedingly exhausted. We had a mule, a driver, and a guide. I was advised, by all means, to lessen the fatigue of the ascent by taking hold of the *queue of Monsieur le Mulet*, a mode of travelling partaking as little of the sublime as possible, and to which I reluctantly acceded. We at last reached the top, and looked down on the Valley of Trie, bedded in rocks, with a few wooden huts in it, a mountain-stream traversing it from the *Glacier* at one end, and with an appearance as if summer could never gain a footing there, before it would be driven out by winter. In the midst of this almost inaccessible and desolate spot, we found a little inn or booth, with refreshments of wine,

bread; and fruit, and a whole drove of English travellers, mounted or on foot.

> "Nor Alps nor Apennines can keep them out,
> Nor fortified redoubt!"

As we mounted the steep wood on the other side of the valley, we met several mules returning, with their drivers only, and looking extremely picturesque, as they were perched above our heads among the jagged pine-trees, and cautiously felt their perilous way over the edges of projecting rocks and stumps of trees, down the zig-zag pathway. The view here is precipitous, extensive, and truly appalling, both from the size of the objects and their rugged wildness. The smell of the pine-trees, the clear air, and the golden sunshine gleaming through the dark foliage refreshed me; and the fatigue from which I had suffered in the morning completely wore off. I had concluded that when we got to the top of the wood that hung over our heads, we should have mastered our difficulties; but they only then began. We emerged into a barren heath or morass of a most toilsome ascent, lengthening as we advanced, with herds of swine, sheep, and cattle feeding on it, and a bed of half-melted snow marking the summit over which we had to pass. We turned aside, half-way up this dreary wilderness, to stop at a *chalet*, where a boy, who tended the straggling cattle, was fast aleep in the middle of the day; and being waked up, procured us a draught of most

delicious water from a fountain. We at length reached the Col de Peaume, and saw Mont Blanc, the King of Mountains, stretching away to the left, with clouds circling round its sides, and snows for ever resting on its head. It was an image of immensity and eternity. Earth had heaved it from its bosom, the "vast cerulean" had touched it with its breath. It was a meeting of earth and sky. Other peaked cliffs rose perpendicularly by its side, and a range of rocks, of red granite, fronted it to the north; but Mont-Blanc itself was round, bald, shining, ample, and equal in its swelling proportions—a huge dumb heap of matter. The valley below was bare, without any object—no ornament, no contrast to set it off—it reposed in silence and in solitude, a world within itself.

"Retire, the world shut out, thy thoughts call home."

There is an end here of vanity and littleness, and all transitory jarring interests. You stand, as it were, in the presence of the Spirit of the Universe, before the majesty of Nature, with her chief elements about you; cloud and air, and rock, and stream, and mountain are brought into immediate contact with primeval Chaos and the great First Cause. The mind hovers over its mysteries deeper than the abysses at our feet; its speculations soar to a height beyond the visible forms it sees around it. As we descended the path on foot (for our muleteer was obliged to return at the barrier between the two states of Savoy and Switzerland

marked by a solitary unhewn stone,) we saw before us the shingled roofs of a hamlet, situated on a patch of verdure near inaccessible columns of granite, and could hear the tinkling bells of a number of cattle pasturing below (an image of patriarchal times!)—we also met one or two peasants returning home with loads of fern, and still farther down, found the ripe harvests of wheat and barley growing close up to the feet of the glaciers (those huge masses of ice arrested in their passage from the mountains, and collected by a thousand winters,) and the violet and gilliflower nestling in the cliffs of the hardest rocks. There are four of these glaciers, that pour their solid floods into the valley, with rivulets issuing from them into the Arbe. The one next to Chamouni is, I think, the finest. It faces you like a broad sheet of congealed snow and water about half-way up the lofty precipice, and then spreads out its arms on each side into seeming batteries and fortifications of undistinguishable rock and ice, as though winter had here "built a fortress for itself," seated in stern state, and amidst frowning horrors. As we advanced into the plain, and before it became dusk, we could discern at a distance the dark wood that skirts the glaciers of Mont-Blanc, the spire of Chamouni, and the bridges that cross the stream. We also discovered, a little way on before us, stragglers on mules, and a cabriolet, that was returning from the valley of Trie, by taking a more circuitous route. As the day closed in and was followed by the moonlight, the

mountains on our right hung over us like a dark pall, and the glaciers gleamed like gigantic shrouds opposite. We might have fancied ourselves inclosed in a vast tomb, but for the sounding cataracts and the light clouds that flitted over our heads. We arrived at Chamouni at last, and found the three inns crowded with English. The entrance to that to which we had been recommended, or rather were conducted by our guide (the Hotel de Londres,) was besieged by English loungers, like a bazaar, or an hotel at some fashionable watering-place, and we were glad to secure a small but comfortable room for the night.

We had an excellent supper, the materials of which we understood came from Geneva. We proceeded the next morning to Saleges, on our way to this capital. If the entrance to the valley of Chamouni is grand and simple, the route from it towards Geneva unites the picturesque to the sublime in the most remarkable degree. For two or three miles you pass along under Mont-Blanc, looking up at it with awe and wonder, derived from a knowledge of its height. The interest, the pleasure you take in it is from conviction and reflection; but turn a corner in the road at a homely village and a little bridge, and it shoots up into the sky of its own accord, like a fantastic vision. Its height is incredible, its brightness dazzling, and you notice the snow crusted upon its surface into round hillocks, with pellucid shadows like shining pavilions for the spirits of the upper regions of the air. Why

is the effect so different from its former desolate and lumpish appearance? Tall rocks rise from the road-side with dark waving pine-trees shooting from them, over the highest top of which, as you look up, you see Mont-Blanc; a ruined tower serves as a foil to the serene smiler in the clouds that mocks at the defences of art, or the encroachments of time. Another mountain opposite, part bare, part clothed with wood, intercepts the view to the left, giving effect to what is seen, and leaving more to the imagination; and the impetuous torrent roars at your feet, a hundred fathoms below, with the bright red clusters of the mountain-ash and loose fragments of rock bending over it, and into which a single step would precipitate you. One of the mightiest objects in nature is set off by the most appropriate and striking accidents; and the impression is of the most romantic and enchanting kind. The scene has an intoxicating effect; you are relieved from the toil of wishing to admire, and the imagination is delighted to follow the lead of the senses. We passed this part of the road in a bright morning, incessantly turning back to admire, and finding fresh cause of pleasure and wonder at every step or pause, loth to leave it, and yet urged onward by continual displays of new and endless beauties. Chamouni seems to lie low enough; but we found that the river and the road along with it winds and tumbles for miles over steep banks or sloping ground; and as you revert your eye, you find that which was a flat converted

into a *table-land*; the objects which were lately beneath you now raised above you, and forming an intermediate stage between the spot where you are and the more distant elevations; and the last snow-crowned summits reflected in translucent pools of water by the road-side, with spots of the brightest azure in them (denoting mineral springs); the luxuriant branches of the ash, willow, and acacia waving over them, and the scarlet flowers of the geranium, or the water-lilies, "all silver white," stuck like gems in the girdle of old winter, and offering a sparkling foreground to the retiring range of icebergs and *avalanches*. This rapid and whirling descent continued almost to Saleges, about twenty miles from Chamouni. Here we dined, and proceeded that night to Bonneville, on nearly level ground; but still with the same character the whole way of a road winding through the most cultivated and smiling country, full of pastures, orchards, vineyards, cottages, villas, refreshing streams, long avenues of trees, and every kind of natural and artificial beauty, flanked with rocks and precipices (on each side) of the most abrupt and terrific appearance, and on which, from the beginning of time, the hand of man has made no impression, except that here and there you see a patch of verdure, a cottage, a flock of sheep, at a height which the eye can hardly reach, and which you think no foot could tread. I have seen no country where I have been more tempted to stop and enjoy myself, where I thought the inhabitants had more

reason to be satisfied, and where, if you could not find happiness, it seemed in vain to seek farther for it. You have every kind and degree of enjoyment; the extremes of luxury and wildness, gigantic sublimity at a distance or over your head, elegance and comfort at your feet; you may gaze at the air-drawn Alps, or shut out the prospect by a flowering shrub, or by a well-clipped hedge, or neatly-wainscoted parlour: and you may vary all these as you please, "with kindliest interchange." Perhaps one of these days I may try the experiment, and turn my back on sea-coal fires, and old English friends! The inn at Bonneville was dirty, ill-provided, and as it generally happens in such cases, the people were inattentive, and the charges high. We were, however, indemnified by the reception we met with at Geneva, where the living was luxurious, and the expence comparatively trifling. I shall not dwell on this subject, lest I should be thought an epicure, though indeed I rather "live a man forbid," being forced to deny myself almost all those good things which I recommend to others. Geneva is, I think, a very neat and picturesque town, not equal to some others we had seen, but very well for a Calvinistic capital. It stands on a rising ground, at the end of the lake, with the purple Rhone running by it, and Mont-Blanc and the Savoy Alps seen on one side, and the Jura on the other. I was struck with the fine forms of many of the women here. Though I was pleased with my fare, I was not altogether delighted

with the manners and appearance of the inhabitants. Their looks may be said to be moulded on the republican maxim, that "you are no better than they," and on the natural inference from it, that "they are better than you." They pass you with that kind of scrutinizing and captious air, as if some controversy was depending between you as to the form of religion or government. I here saw Rousseau's house, and also read the *Edinburgh Review* for May. The next day we passed along in the Diligence through scenery of exquisite beauty and perfect cultivation—vineyards and farms, and villas and hamlets of the most enviable description, succeeding each other in uninterrupted connexion, by the smooth margin of the silver lake. We saw Lausanne by moonlight. Its situation, as far as I could judge, and the environs were superb. We arrived that night at Vevey, after a week's absence and an exceedingly delightful tour.

CHAPTER XXVII.

We returned down the Rhine through Holland. I was willing to see the contrast between flat and lofty, and between Venice and Amsterdam. We left Vevey on the 20th of September, and arrived in England on the 16th of October. It was at first exceedingly hot; we encountered several days of severe cold on the road, and it afterwards became mild and pleasant again. We hired a *char-aux-bancs* from Vevey to Basle, and it took us four days to reach this latter place; the expense of the conveyance was twenty-four francs a day, besides the driver. The first part of our journey, as we ascended from the Lake on the way to Moudon, was like an aërial voyage, from the elevation and the clearness of the atmosphere; yet still through the most lovely country imaginable, and with glimpses of the grand objects behind us (seen over delicious pastures, and through glittering foliage) that were truly magical. The combinations of language, however, answer but ill to the varieties of nature, and by repeating these descriptions so often, I am afraid of becoming tiresome. My excuse must be, that I have little to relate but what I saw. After mounting to a considerable height, we descended to Moudon, a small town situated in a

most romantic valley. The accommodations at the inn here were by no means good, though it is a place of some pretensions. In proportion to the size of the house and the massiveness of the furniture, the provisions of the kitchen appeared to be slender, and the attendance slack. The freshness of the air the next morning, and the striking beauty and rapid changes of the scenery, soon made us forget any disappointment we had experienced in this respect. As we ascended a steep hill on this side of Moudon, and looked back, first at the green dewy valley under our feet, with the dusky town and the blue smoke rising from it, then at the road we had traversed the preceding evening, winding among thick groves of trees, and last at the Savoy Alps on the other side of the Lake of Geneva (with which we had been familiar for four months, and which seemed to have no mind to quit us) I perceived a bright speck close to the top of one of these—I was delighted, and said it was Mont Blanc. Our driver was of a different opinion, was positive it was only a cloud, and I accordingly supposed I had taken a sudden fancy for a reality. I began in secret to take myself to task, and to lecture myself for my proneness to build theories on the foundation of my conjectures and wishes. On turning round occasionally, however, I observed that this cloud remained in the same place, and I noticed the circumstance to our guide, as favouring my first suggestion; for clouds do not usually remain long in the same place. We disputed the

point for half a day, and it was not till the afternoon when we had reached the other side of the lake of Neufchatel, that this same cloud rising like a canopy over the point where it had hovered, "in shape and station proudly eminent," he acknowledged it to be Mont Blanc. We were then at a distance of about forty miles from Vevey, and eighty or ninety from Chamouni. This will give the reader some idea of the scale and nature of this wonderful scenery. We dined at Iverdun (a pretty town), at the head of the lake, and passed on to Neufchatel, along its enchanting and almost unrivalled borders, having the long unaspiring range of the Jura on our left (from the top of which St. Preux, on his return from his wanderings round the world, first greeted that country, where "torrents of delight had poured into his heart," and, indeed, we could distinguish the *Dent de Jamant* right over Clarens almost the whole way), and on our right was the rippling lake, its low cultivated banks on the other side, then a brown rocky ridge of mountains, and the calm golden peaks of the snowy passes of the Simplon, the Great St. Bernard, and (as I was fain to believe) of Monteroso rising into the evening sky at intervals beyond. Meanwhile we rode on through a country abounding in farms and vineyards and every kind of comfort, and deserving the epithets, "verd et riant." Sometimes a tall rock rose by the road side; or a ruinous turret or a well-compacted villa attracted our attention. Neufchatel is larger and handsomer than

Iverdun, and is remarkable for a number of those genteel and quiet-looking habitations, where people seem to have retired (in the midst of society) to spend the rest of their lives in ease and comfort: they are not for shew, nor are they very striking from situation; they are neither fashionable nor romantic; but the decency and sober ornaments of their exterior evidently indicate fireside enjoyments and cultivated taste within. This kind of retreat, where there is nothing to surprise, nothing to disgust, nothing to draw the attention out of itself, uniting the advantages of society and solitude, of simplicity and elegance, and where the mind can indulge in a sort of habitual and self-centred satisfaction, is the only one which I should never feel a wish to quit. The *golden mean* is, indeed, an exact description of the mode of life I should like to lead—of the style I should like to write; but alas! I am afraid I shall never succeed in either object of my ambition!

The next day being cloudy, we lost sight entirely of the highest range of Alpine hills, and saw them no more afterwards. The road lay for some miles through an open and somewhat dreary country, in which the only objects of curiosity were the tall peasant-girls working in the fields, with their black gauze head-dresses, sticking out from their matted hair like the wings of a dragon-fly. We, however, had the Lake of Bienne and Isle of St. Pierre in prospect before us, which are so admirably de

scribed by Rousseau, in his "Reveries of a Solitary Walker," and to which he gives the preference over the Lake of Geneva. The effect from the town of Bienne where we stopped to dine was not much; but in climbing to the top of a steep sandy hill beyond it, we saw the whole to great advantage. Evening was just closing in, and the sky was cloudy, with a few red streaks near the horizon: the first range of Alps only was discernible; the Lake was of a dull sombre lead colour, and the Isle of St. Pierre was like a dark spot in it; the hills on one side of the Lake ascended abrupt and gloomy; extensive forests swept in magnificent surges over the rich valley to our left; towns were scattered below us here and there, as in a map; rocky fragments hung over our heads, with the shattered trunks of huge pine-trees; a mountain-torrent rushed down the irregular chasm between us and the base of the mountain, that rose in misty grandeur on the opposite side; but the whole was in the greatest keeping, and viewed by the twilight of historic landscape. Yet amidst all this solemnity and grandeur, the eye constantly reverted to one little dark speck, the Isle of St. Pierre (where Rousseau had taken refuge for a few months from his sorrows and his persecutions) with a more intense interest than all the rest; for the widest prospects are trivial to the deep recesses of the human heart, and its anxious beatings are far more audible than the "loud torrent or the whirlwind's roar!" The

clouds of vapours, and the ebon cloud of night prevented our having a distinct view of the road that now wound down to ————, where we stopped for the night. The inn here (the Rose and Crown), though almost a solitary house in a solitary valley, is a very good one, and the cheapest we met with abroad. Our bill for supper, lodging, and breakfast, amounted to only seven francs. Our route, the following morning, lay up a broad steep valley, with a fine gravelly road through it, and forests of pine and other trees, raised like an amphitheatre on either side. The sun had just risen, and the drops of rain still hung upon the branches. On the other side we came into a more open country, and then again were inclosed among wild and narrow passes of high rock, split either by thunder or earthquakes into ledges, like castle walls, coming down to the edge of a stream that winds through the valley, or aspiring to an airy height, with the diminished pines growing on their very tops, and patches of verdure and the foliage of other trees flourishing in the interstices between them. It was the last scene of the kind we encountered. I begin to tire of these details, and will hasten to the end of my journey, touching only on a few detached points and places.

BASLE.—This is a remarkably neat town; but it lies beyond the confines of the picturesque. We stopped at the Three Kings, and were shewn into a long, narrow room, which did not promise well at

first; but the waiter threw up the window at the further end, and we all at once saw the full breadth of the Rhine, rolling rapidly beneath it, after passing through the arches of an extensive bridge. It was clear moonlight, and the effect was fine and unexpected. The broad mass of water rushed by with clamorous sound and stately impetuosity, as if it were carrying a message from the mountains to the ocean! The next morning we perceived that it was of a muddy colour. We thought of passing down it in a small boat; but the covering was so low as to make the posture uncomfortable, or, if raised higher, there was a danger of its being overset by any sudden gust of wind. We therefore went by the Diligence to Colmar and Strasburg. I regretted afterwards that we did not take the right hand road by Freybourg and the Black Forest—the woods, hills, and mouldering castles of which, as far as I could judge from a distance, are the most romantic and beautiful possible. The tower at Strasburg is red, and has a singular appearance. The fortifications here, in time of peace, have an effect like the stillness of death.

RASTADT.—We crossed the Rhine at Strasburg, and proceeded through Rastadt and Manheim to Mayence. We stopped the first night at the Golden Cross at Rastadt, which is the very best inn I was at during the whole time I was abroad. Among other things, we had *chiffrons* for supper, which I found on inquiry were wood-partridges, which are

much more highly esteemed than the field ones. So delicately do they distinguish in Germany! Manheim is a splendid town, both from its admirable buildings and the glossy neatness of the houses. They are too fine to live in, and seem only made to be looked at. Would that one of the streets could be set down in Waterloo-place! Yet even Manheim is not equal to the towns in Italy. There the houses are palaces.

Mayence is a disagreeable town. We half missed the scenery between this and Coblentz, the only part of the Rhine worth seeing. We saw it, however, by moonlight (which hung over it like a silver veil), with its nodding towers and dismantled fortresses over our heads, the steep woody banks on the opposite side, and the broad glittering surface of the Rhine, reflecting the white clouds or dark sail gliding by. It was like a brilliant dream; nor did the mellow winding notes of the horn, calling to the warders of the drawbridges as we passed along, lessen the effect. Ehrenbreitstein overlooks Coblentz, and crowns it with magnificence and beauty. The Duke of Wellington, I understood, had been here, and being asked by a French officer, "If it could be taken?" answered, "Yes; in two ways, by hunger and gold." Did the Duke of Wellington make this answer? I cry you mercy—it was the Frenchman who gave the answer: the Duke said nothing.

Cologne is the birth-place of Rubens; and at one

of the churches, there is a *Crucifixion* by him, which we did not see, for it being the time of divine service, the back was turned to the spectator, and only a copy of it was exhibited. The road from Cologne to Neuss is the only really bad one we found on the Continent; it is a mere sand-bank, and not likely to be soon mended, from its vicinity to the Rhine.

From Neuss to Cleves we went in the Royal Prussian Diligence, and from thence to Nimeguen, the first town in Holland. From a small tower here we had an admirable view of the country. It was nearly a perfect flat all round, as far as the eye could reach; yet it was a rich and animated, as well as a novel scene. You saw a greater extent of surface than is possible in a hilly country; all within the circumference of the horizon lay exposed to the eye. It was like seeing a section of the entire globe, or like "striking flat its thick rotundity." It was a fine clear afternoon, and in the midst of this uniformity of surface, you saw every other variety—rich meadows, with flocks and herds feeding, hedge-rows, willowy banks, woods, corn-fields, roads winding along in different directions, canals, boats sailing, innumerable villages, windmills, bridges, and towns and cities in the far-off horizon; but neither rock, nor mountain, nor barren waste, nor any object that prevented your seeing the one beyond it. There were no contrasts, no masses, but the immense space stretched out beneath the eye

was filled up with dotted lines, and minute, detached, countless beauties. It was as if the earth were curiously fringed and embroidered. Holland is the same everywhere, except that it is often more intersected by canals; and that as you approach the sea, the water prevails over the land. We proceeded from Nimeguen to Utrecht and Amsterdam, by the stage. The rich uninterrupted cultivation, the marks of successful industry and smiling plenty, are equally commendable and exhilarating; but the repetition of the same objects, and the extent of *home* view, become at last oppressive. If you see much at once, there ought to be masses and relief; if you see only detached objects, you ought to be confined to a few of them at a time. What is the use of seeing a hundred windmills, a hundred barges, a hundred willow-trees, or a hundred herds of cattle at once? Any one specimen is enough, and the others hang like a dead-weight on the traveller's patience. Besides, there is something lumpish and heavy in the aspect of the country; the eye is clogged and impeded in its progress over it by dams and dykes, and the marshy nature of the soil damps and chills imagination. There is a like extent of country at Cassel in France; but from the greater number of woods and a more luxuriant vegetation (leaving the bare earth seldom visible,) the whole landscape seems in one glow, and the eye scours delighted over waving groves and purple distances.

The towns and villas in Holland are unrivalled for neatness, and an appearance of wealth and comfort. All the way from Utrecht to Amsterdam, to the Hague, to Rotterdam, you might fancy yourself on Clapham Common. The canals are lined with farms and summer-houses, with orchards and gardens of the utmost beauty, and in excellent taste. The exterior of their buildings is as clean as the interior of ours; their public-houses look as nice and well-ordered as our private ones. If you are up betimes in a morning, you see a servant wench (the domestic Naiad,) with a leathern pipe, like that attached to a fire-engine, drenching the walls and windows with pail-fulls of water. With all this, they suffocate you with tobacco smoke in their stage-coaches and canal-boats, and you do not see a set of clean teeth from one end of Holland to the other. Amsterdam did not answer our expectations; it is a kind of paltry, rubbishly Venice. The pictures of Rembrandt here (some of which have little shade) are inferior to what we have in England. I was assured here that Rembrandt was the greatest painter in the world, and at Antwerp that Rubens was. The inn at Amsterdam (the Rousland) is one of the best I have been at; and an inn is no bad test of the civilization and diffusion of comfort in a country. We saw a play at the theatre here; and the action was exceedingly graceful and natural. The chimes at Amsterdam, which play every quarter of an hour, at

first seemed gay and delightful, and in a day and a half became tedious and intolerable. It was as impertinent as if a servant could not come into the room to answer the bell without dancing and jumping over the chairs and tables every time. A row of lime-trees grew and waved their branches in the middle of the street facing the hotel. The Dutch, who are not an ideal people, bestow all their taste and fancy on practical things, and instead of creating the chimeras of poetry, devote their time and thoughts to embellishing the objects of ordinary and familiar life. Ariosto said, it was easier to build palaces with words, than common houses with stones. The Hague is Hampton-Court turned into a large town. There is an excellent collection of pictures here, with some of my old favourites brought back from the Louvre, by Rembrandt, Vandyke, Paul Potter, &c. Holland is, perhaps, the only country which you gain nothing by seeing. It is exactly the same as the Dutch landscapes of it. I was shewn the plain and village of Ryswick, close to the Hague. It struck me I had seen something very like it before. It is the back-ground of Paul Potter's *Bull*. From the views and models of Chinese scenery and buildings preserved in the Museum here, it would seem that Holland is the China of Europe. Delft is a very model of comfort and polished neatness. We met with a gentleman belonging to this place in the *trackschuyt*, who, with other civilities, shewed us

his house (a perfect picture in its kind,) and invited us in to rest and refresh ourselves, while the other boat was getting ready. These things are an extension of one's idea of humanity. It is pleasant, and one of the uses of travel, to find large tracts of land cultivated, cities built and repaired, all the conveniences of life, men, women, and children laughing, talking, and happy, common sense and good manners on the other side of the English channel. I would not wish to lower any one's idea of England; but let him enlarge his notions of existence and enjoyment beyond it. He will not think the worse of his own country, for thinking better of human nature! The inconveniences of travelling by canal-boats in Holland is, that you make little way, and are forced to get out and have your luggage taken into another boat at every town you come to, which happens two or three times in the course of the day. Let no one go to the Washington Arms at Rotterdam; it is only fit for American sea-captains. Rotterdam is a handsome bustling town; and on inquiring our way, we were accosted by a Dutch servant-girl, who had lived in an English family for a year, and who spoke English better, and with less of a foreign accent, than any French woman I ever heard. This convinced me that German is not so difficult to an Englishman as French; for the difficulty of acquirng any foreign language must be mutual to the natives of each country. There was a steam-boat here which

set sail for London the next day; but we preferred passing through Ghent, Lille, and Antwerp. This last is a very delightful city, and the spire of the cathedral exquisitely light, beautiful, and well proportioned. Indeed, the view of the whole city from the water-side is as singular as it is resplendent. We saw the Rubenses in the great church here. They were hung outside the choir; and seen against the huge white walls, looked like pictures dangling in a broker's shop for sale. They did not form a part of the building. The person who shewed us the Taking Down from the Cross, said, "It was the finest picture in the world." I said, "One of the finest"—an answer with which he appeared by no means satisfied. We returned by way of St. Omers and Calais. I wished to see Calais once more, for it was here I first landed in France twenty years ago.

I confess, London looked to me on my return like a long, straggling, dirty country-town; nor do the names of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, or Coventry, sound like a trumpet in the ears, or invite our pilgrim steps like those of Sienna, of Cortona, Perugia, Arezzo, Pisa and Ferrara. I am not sorry, however, that I have got back. There is an old saying, *Home is home, be it never so homely.* However delightful or striking the objects may be abroad, they do not take the same hold of you, nor can you identify yourself with them as at home. Not only is

the language an insuperable obstacle; other things as well as men speak a language new and strange to you. You live comparatively in a dream, though a brilliant and a waking one. It is in vain to urge that you learn the language; that you are familiarized with manners and scenery. No other language can ever become our mother-tongue. We may learn the words; but they do not convey the same feelings, nor is it possible they should do so, unless we could begin our lives over again, and divide our conscious being into two different selves. Not only can we not attach the same meaning to words, but we cannot see objects with the same eyes, or form new loves and friendships after a certain period of our lives. The pictures that most delighted me in Italy were those I had before seen in the Louvre "with eyes of youth." I could revive this feeling of enthusiasm, but not transfer it. Neither would I recommend the going abroad when young, to become a mongrel being, half French, half English. It is better to be something than nothing. It is well to see foreign countries to enlarge one's speculative knowledge, and dispel false prejudices and libellous views of human nature; but our affections must settle at home. Besides though a dream, it is a splendid one. It is fine to see the white Alps rise in the horizon of fancy at the distance of a thousand miles; or the imagination may wing its thoughtful flight among the castellated Apennines, roaming from

city to city over cypress and olive grove, viewing the inhabitants as they crawl about mouldering palaces or temples, which no hand has touched for the last three hundred years, and see the genius of Italy brooding over the remains of virtue, glory and liberty, with Despair at the gates, an English Minister handing the keys to a foreign Despot, and stupid Members of Parliament wondering what is the matter!

THE END.

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